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ABSTRACT

Emphasizing successful reading instruction as a nonrepetitive, creative process which provides the child with both challenge and opportunities for success, units in this handbook focus on the child as an individual--his behavior, his maturity, and his capacities for understanding, learning, and creating. Each of the 10 units provides teaching techniques and classroom examples concerning the child as he (1) explores and discovers, (2) listens, (3) talks, (4) expresses his ideas in writing, (5) feels competent, (6) gives clues to the teacher, (7) follows clues given by the teacher, (8) learns to select materials and activities, (9) helps and is helped by other children, and (10) thinks for himself. Appended are suggestions for teacher preparation, for developing specific reading skills, and for the use of audio-visual materials; recommended independent learning activities; a section on language development in the content fields--science, social studies, math, art, and music; and a brief bibliography. (JMC)

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English Language Arts

Primary Reading Handbook

-- AND ALL THIS IS READING

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TE 002 109

Bulletin
No. 203

Montgomery County Public Schools
Rockville, Maryland
Homer O. Elseroad
Superintendent of Schools

INTRODUCTION

Each child you will read about in this bulletin is a real child. As each participated in classroom activities -- listening, speaking, reading, and composing -- his actions and responses were objectively recorded in anecdotal form.

By analyzing what Mahilda did, what John said, what Mary Lynne wrote, it is hoped that you will gain deeper insights into how all children learn -- or fail to learn.

An honest search for better techniques and methods to facilitate learning ultimately becomes focused on the individual child, his unique capabilities and limitations. In order to release the personal capacities for understanding, learning, and creating with which each child is born, you will need to find many different teaching keys which will unlock the doors which stand between the individual and the full realization of his potential abilities.

Let's take a long look at each child within your own classroom as he goes about the business of learning.

Is he eager or defiant, over-stimulated or never stimulated, factual or creative, joyous or sick-at-heart, a genius, an "ordinary kid," or a repeated failure?

As you "read" the behaviors of each child, you might ask yourself:

> What experiences can I plan for this child which will promote his adjustment to the social demands of the school situation?
> What activities can I plan for this child which will increase his perception and discrimination of what he sees and hears?
> What opportunities can I provide for this child that will encourage the acceptance of responsibility for his own learning?

You may feel that all these questions need to be answered for all of your children. As you observe their behaviors in learning situations, you will discover that your answers to these questions will be different for each child. These answers will provide you with the clues you need for asking yourself additional questions which will become more and more specific as you become ever more aware of each child's strengths and weaknesses.

A most important aspect of skillful teaching is the ability to maintain a delicate balance between providing a child with opportunities for success and, at appropriate times, providing challenges which stimulate his desire to push into the unknown. If the challenges are far beyond his present capacities, he will come to regard himself as a failure and build a wall of resistance to learning that in many cases can never be broken down. If he is not challenged enough, he will fail to work up to his potential and will contentedly drift into undesirable attitudes toward learning.

Successful teaching is a non-repetitive creative process. No child is irrevocably linked to an assembly line of grade level standards and activities which purports to manufacture individuals alike in emotional, social, and intellectual maturity. Instead, each child is viewed as a person of worth and integrity and is carefully guided through appropriate learning experiences so that the end result is truly "an original."

If we accept in practice the philosophy that each child learns differently and at a different rate, then no child can be viewed as a problem learner. Arbitrarily established standards of achievement are likely to produce in the teacher the idea that the child is delinquent, when she merely needs to gear the instruction to the child's rate and need. Blanket classroom instruction based on unthinking habitual standard teaching practices will eventually smother the intellectual growth of all children regardless of their innate abilities.

The teacher who is engrossed in helping each child to take his own next step does not seek ways to impose preconceived curriculum goals. The teacher who keeps the needs and abilities of each child at the center of his mind's eye, may decide that, for some children, grade level standards are unrealistic or inappropriate and could damage self-concepts and learning attitudes.

Does all this have implications for the teaching of reading? We sincerely believe that it does.

Learning to read is influenced by aspects of growth which are common to all other learning experiences. The success of reading instruction is in direct proportion to the teacher's knowledge of growth patterns and their interrelatedness with the four facets of communication -- listening, speaking, reading, and composing.

Listening comes first. The child gradually develops a listening vocabulary as he associates meaning with the sounds he hears. He imitates these sounds, uses them to communicate his thoughts, and thus develops a speaking vocabulary. He only knows what he can hear with comprehension and say with the necessary clarity to communicate his thoughts.

The teacher who is charged with the responsibility of introducing a child to written symbols should first ascertain whether he exhibits the necessary proficiency in oral communication. Facility in understanding and using oral symbols is a vital prerequisite to the understanding and use of printed symbols.

The child who exhibits deficiencies in understanding what he hears or in verbalizing what he thinks is unprepared for reading with understanding. If these deficiencies are overlooked or ignored and the child is plunged into an incomprehensible sea of printed symbols, he will wallow and thrash about, sometimes barely keeping his head above water, and sometimes sinking under the weight of his own disappointment and frustration. He will mistakenly come to think of himself as a non-reader and will lose all hope of ever getting "into the swim" of reading.

But he can find success in beginning reading if he is afforded the opportunities to attain sufficient maturity and the oral proficiency which will enable him to discover the relationships between sounds and the written symbols for sounds. For when a child first reconstructs printed symbols into speech, his understanding is based on knowledge of word meanings acquired through oral experiences.

Will this facility with oral reception and expression be the same for all children? Assuredly not -- and that's one of the reasons why the teaching of reading is such a complex procedure and why it is difficult to describe in a few words.

The perceptive teacher is able to recognize when a child has reached an oral level that is satisfactory for him. When this individual level of oral ability is attained, the child is ready to attack the complexity of written symbols. The teacher supplies him with the aid and encouragement he needs to proceed at his own rate, in his own way, along his own unique pathway of learning to read. No two children will ever tread the same pathway if the teacher is honestly encouraging each child to pursue his own interests, to develop his own pattern of needed skills, and to seek solutions to self-identified problems for himself.

If there is a secret to teaching a child to read with understanding, it lies in the preparation. The activities listed below are some aspects of growth which may be influential in this preparation:

Participates in group discussions
Plans with a group
Reports on individual or group observations
Describes objects or activities
Analyzes or evaluates work and play situations
Participates in dramatizations
Follows directions
Asks relevant questions
Interprets details of a picture
Identifies the main idea of a series of pictures
Arranges a series of pictures in sequential order
Categorizes pictures by class, function, structure
Recalls facts of a story
Identifies the main idea of a story
Recalls the sequence of a story
Anticipates outcomes
Relates story situations to "life"
Differentiates between reality and fantasy
Memorizes songs, poems, finger plays
Compares objects or ideas
Contrasts objects or ideas
Relates opposites
Categorizes objects by size, color, structure, function
Generalizes from stated facts
Identifies personal and group problems
Solves personal and group problems

In order to plan experiences for children who exhibit specific oral language needs, you may need to ask yourself:

> What activities will help a child who uses gestures excessively as a substitute for speech?
> In what ways can I help a child enlarge a limited listening and speaking vocabulary?
> When a child habitually uses single words or phrases, how can I extend his oral speech to include a variety of sentence patterns?
> What resources are available to offer advice and help for a child with serious speech defects?
> What kind of guidance is desirable for a child who has never before been exposed to standard English language usage?

Although it is true that the vast majority of our children learn to read, most educators agree that the number of those who read less effectively than they should -- or could -- is far too high.

We are failing with these children because the initial eagerness they bring to reading is snuffed out by prescribed lock-step methods of teaching.

In such a method the child has little opportunity for originality of thought or expression. He is a member of a static group and reads what he is told to read. He follows through on teacher-imposed tasks (usually as suggested by The Teacher's Guide) which keep him busy, despite the fact that they are usually inappropriate for him. He goes through the motions of discovery while mentally trying to determine what pat answers his teacher expects. He learns to comply and conform to expectations his teacher has been taught are standard for his age and grade. In short, there is grave danger of his developing into a mechanically-adept non-thinking robot whose only purpose in school is to regurgitate the facts, generalizations, and conclusions with which he has been force-fed. This child "succeeds," but he is _not_ a successful reader. He has never been given the opportunity to explore the height and breadth of his own mind nor to color thoughtful responses with the myriad hues of his own personality.

On the other hand, if the child is allowed to select reading materials for _himself_, if the child tackles and masters new skills because he needs them to reach goals he has set for _himself_, if the child knows that his teacher has high regard for his ability to think for _himself_, then _this_ child succeeds and he _is_ a successful reader. He will be reading as effectively as he can.

If this bulletin stimulates your thinking so that you can make wise decisions about significant learnings for individual children, each child in your classroom will wear that bright, shining, first-day-in-first-grade look throughout the school year.

You will have used your intimate knowledge of each child as a guide to planning activities which have facilitated his physical, mental, and emotional growth.

You will have used every teaching method and technique of which you are aware in your search for better ways to help each child develop needed skills and abilities.

You will have used your professional knowledge and zeal to provide each child with opportunities for total language development in real situations.

In the truest sense of the word, you will have become A Teacher.

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THE CHILD

Explores and Discovers

A child is born with a need to explore and discover. In satisfying these needs, he forms his earliest concepts. Through direct contact with people, things, and events, he begins the life-long task of defining his relationship to his environment.

As an integral part of the school curriculum, a child must be encouraged to observe, touch, smell, listen to, examine, take apart, and put together all manner of things. Personal involvement in such activities does more than develop a fund of knowledge. It enables the child to elaborate his modes of operating and to consolidate his understandings. It lays down a basis for trusting his own experience and judgment. When properly encouraged in these pursuits, the child develops independence, initiative, and enthusiasm. As he observes and listens to others, he becomes alert and sympathetic to vicarious experience. This interest sends him on his way to search for extended meanings in a variety of reading materials.

Feeling is Believing

Mahilda, a five-year-old near the completion of her Head Start experience, was participating in a class activity. Her teacher was making popcorn. She showed the small grains of uncooked corn and explained that the corn was too hard to eat in its present state. Mahilda said that she thought she could eat the corn as it was. Her teacher passed a grain to Mahilda so that she could feel the hardness. Mahilda felt the grain, then put it into her mouth and tried unsuccessfully to eat it. "That's too hard to eat," she said.

I wonder what kind of significant learnings the teacher has planned for.

As the corn began to pop, the children commented on the change in appearance.

Billy asked, "If it looks different, will it feel different?"

In what ways are the child's exploratory questions important?

"Let's feel it and find out," the teacher said as she passed the popcorn. "How does it feel to you, Mahilda?"

"It's soft, now, and kind of squashy," Mahilda giggled. "Can I eat it now?"

"Try it," the teacher replied.

Mahilda crunched contentedly.

Mahilda was exposed to:

1. Using her senses as a means of discovery
2. Seeing that materials can change form when heat is applied
3. Developing a concept by relating to opposites

Her teacher thought:

Mahilda likes to decide things for herself. I can make good use of her independent-mindedness by directing her toward self-learning activities. All of my children might benefit from this approach, but some children will accept it more readily than others.

Stretch and Grow

The first grade class went to the multipurpose room to look at the Book Fair display. No one was on duty to show the books or to permit pupils to purchase books. The children began to select books, look through them, and bring them to the teacher to find answers to their questions. Most children picked up many books in which the printed material was too difficult for them to read. The teacher did not limit the children's selections, control their movements, or quiet their talk and laughter.

What learnings occur while a child explores books?

At the end of the period the teacher asked the children to put the books away if they knew where they belonged.

She commented to the observer, "Children are more important than books."

All 'round Reading

The proud possessor of a United Nations' flag brought it to share with his class during United Nations' Week.

The children were puzzled by the unlabeled, polar projection world map which occupies the center of the flag. They couldn't decide what it represented.

"It looks something like a map," one girl finally suggested.

"It doesn't look like any map I ever saw," one of the boys remarked.

"Maybe it's an old-timey map, like back in Columbus' time," the first girl insisted.

Another boy reminded the group that the United Nations was not "old." "Why would they use an 'old' map?" he argued.

Exploring ideas is often filled with "maybe's" and "perhaps's"!

But the idea of a map had taken hold, and the children began to discuss the various areas shown on the map and what they could possibly represent.

In what ways do children grow when they share ideas?

All of a sudden, a small boy pushed his way to the front of the group and, pointing to a particular portion, said excitedly, "That looks like it might be North America. See how it's joined in this place to a piece almost as big? That could be South America."

There was a moment's silence as the children considered the possibility.

"If that's so, then this part is Africa," the original skeptic said slowly. "And this great big piece is Asia and the one all by itself has got to be Australia. But, it doesn't look like Australia on our wall map. Why would they draw a map so crazy? It doesn't make sense."

As the children chattered and discussed the problem among themselves, the teacher took the map down from the wall and invited four children to hold it spread out in a horizontal position.

"I know! I know!" the small boy burst out. "It's as though we were above the North Pole and looking down on the world! We're seeing the world from the top!"

"You're absolutely right, Jack," the teacher smiled. "You figured it out. This kind of map is called a 'polar projection.' Why do you suppose we need maps like this?"

How do these children feel about themselves and each other?

Jack had opened the way for the rest of the class toward developing new concepts of map interpretation and reading.

Freedom to Try

The whole class had gone to the science center where the science resource teacher was conducting a lesson. The teacher asked one boy to climb into a box and act as a jack-in-the-box. Later, other boys were asked to find different ways of moving the box with the boy in it. They pushed it, carried it, and, after putting skates under it, pushed it again.

This is "felt" meaning!

Others walked a balance beam, played with a balancing toy, stapled, sawed, hammered, cut, and punched, using the supplies available in the room.

How does this activity further the development of concepts and use of language?

Near the end of the period, the teacher called the class together and asked them what they had done during the period. "Played" and "worked" were the two most prevalent replies. Using the reply worked, the teacher asked what things were used to do the work. Saw, hammer, skates, scissors, stapler, and punch were answers given by members of the class. The teacher asked whether they could give a word which would stand for this group of things. John gave the word "tools."

The teacher facilitated the putting together of ideas to reach conclusions.

The class then discussed the definition of tools and indicated why each of the items mentioned was a tool.

Things to Think About - Unit I

1. There are many things that we can't really know unless we have had an experience with them. Illustrate from your personal experience.

2. How can a child's personality be affected by opportunities to explore and discover?

THE CHILD

Listens

A child responds to sounds before he gives evidence of seeing. He quickly learns to sort sounds into those categories of pleasant, unpleasant, and frightening.

As a child develops, his listening habits differ in their nature and purpose. In the beginning, listening is simple and more or less incidental and serves as one of the chief means of obtaining experience. At a later stage, listening becomes more pointed, refined, and complex. It becomes a functional means of obtaining information.

The degree of auditory skill and the meaning attachments for words which a child possesses is reflected in his speech patterns and the significances of his thoughts. Sound and meaning tend to merge together.

The child must be so motivated that he has a constructive attitude toward the listening he is to do. The child can be helped in developing this attitude if the teacher joins with him in the effort to establish a clear purpose for listening.

It is also important that a child be cast in the role of both speaker and audience. As a member of the audience, he must experience the need to make those adjustments necessary to listen effectively to a variety of children whose tone, diction, and mannerisms have great variation.

In addition, a child needs to become a critical listener. He needs to evaluate what he hears in light of what he knows. The teacher must help the child develop a rich vocabulary and a rich storehouse of meanings which will enable him to arrive at intelligent decisions.

Listening establishes an important basis for reading, because the attachment of meaning to the spoken word is the same intellectual process as attaching meaning to the written word.

Observing With Our Ears: Creative Listening

In the beginning weeks of school, Miss Babcock had frequently taken her class "exploring" in the music center. The children had experimented with the rhythm instruments:

- discovering the sounds made by each instrument
- classifying these sounds as to high, low, loud, soft
- accompanying a friend's movements with an instrument that interpreted his rhythmic pattern and mood

The teacher plans to build upon these preparatory activities to ensure continuity of experiences.

On this sunny, autumn day, Miss Babcock and the children had just returned from a walk during which they had been listening for sounds.

Miss Babcock took the children into the music center. She said, "Today, as we explore, see if you can find an instrument that makes a sound like something you heard on our walk."

The children moved among the instruments, experimenting with one and then another. Miss Babcock walked about the room, stopping from time to time to talk to a child.

How does such an activity fit into the total of good listening habits?

"Listen," said William, "this drum sounds like my feet as I walked on the driveway."

"The finger cymbals sort of sound like the birds saying 'tweet'," said Pam.

"I can't find what I want," lamented Ronnie. "I've tried the triangle, the recorder, and lots of other stuff and nothing sounds like the pigeon that said 'peep'."

"You may have to make that sound with your mouth," said Paula.

"Good listening," said Miss Babcock. "It may not be possible to find an instrument that makes a sound like one you heard."

"These sand blocks really sound like my feet walking in the leaves," said James.

Elaine did not have an instrument. "I can use my mouth to make a sound," she announced. "Listen. Sh sh sh sh sh. That's how the wind sounded. If we all do it together, I bet it will sound just right."

What other activities might follow this one?

Now Hear This!: Listening for Differences

The class of twenty-seven children was enthusiastically singing the chorus of a song which accompanies a dramatization of "The Three Billy Goats Gruff."

Although they had seen the play several times with a different cast of characters each time, they watched eagerly as four members of their class performed the favorite story once again.

"It is I, Little Billy Goat," squeaked Alvin as he walked with tiny little steps across the balance-beam-bridge. "You wouldn't want to eat me, ol' Troll. I wouldn't hardly make a mouthful."

The Troll allowed him to pass and crouched in wait for Middle Billy Goat Gruff. But when Middle Billy Goat bleated, "My great big brother will be dee-li-cious! Tasty and really nourishing. Wait for him!" the Troll allowed him to pass.

The children laughed and applauded with delight as Great Big Billy Goat Gruff finally pushed the wicked Troll off the bridge. The three goats linked arms to sing the final refrain:

Alvin: "Little Billy Goat"-----
Lisa: "Mittle Billy Goat"-----
Bill: "Great Big Billy Goat Gruff!"

The teacher, Mrs. Motley, had detected the error in Lisa's pronunciation; and later that afternoon, as the children were working independently at their desks, she handed Lisa a slip of paper on which was written "Little Billy Goat" and asked her to read it aloud.

Lisa looked surprised but complied with Mrs. Motley's request. She looked even more surprised when Mrs. Motley asked her to write down the words, "Middle Billy Goat."

She wrote with no hesitation, "Mittle Billy Goat."

"What do you think that means, Lisa?" Mrs. Motley asked.

Lisa shook her head. "I don't know what is a 'Mittle Billy Goat.' But, that's the way the song goes."

Mrs. Motley smiled, "Lisa, describe the position of your desk in relation to Jan's and Ted's."

"My desk's between their two desks," Lisa promptly replied.

"Jan is on your right side. Ted is on your left side. And you're smack dab in the _____," Mrs. Motley waited expectantly.

The teacher had learned to listen.

Was this an effective way of helping Lisa to arrive at the correct pronunciation of the word?

Comprehension clarifies what we hear.

"Middle. My desk's in the middle," responded Lisa.

Mrs. Motley began, "Little Billy Goat is first across the bridge and Great Big Billy Goat is last across the bridge and ________."

Lisa interrupted, "Middle Billy Goat goes in between them! He's the middle one. I thought he had a special name, but he's the middle one!"

"Now let's see you write 'Middle Billy Goat'," laughed Mrs. Motley.

Lisa picked up the pencil, paused a moment and then asked, "It's 'd's', not 't's'?"

Mrs. Motley nodded, and Lisa wrote "Middle Billy Goat."

The children experienced:

1. A sharpening of their awareness of sounds around them
2. The pleasures and difficulties of reproducing familiar sounds with musical instruments.

The teacher thought:

1. All of my children seem to be increasing in their ability to attend to what they hear and to distinguish among sounds.
2. I wonder if they would profit from being introduced to some new musical instruments? What listening activities will stimulate other levels of creativity?
3. Is it possible that those who are not so proficient at this listening game need more experience in auditory discrimination?
4. I am especially interested in Lisa. Is she poor at distinguishing among sounds, or are her standards for doing so even higher than those of other students?

Side Effects: Listening and Remembering

Michael brought two shells to a gathering of all first grade classes. He was not able to identify the shells by name nor to give other information. His teacher suggested that he find pictures of his shells in a reference book and report to the class the additional information. Michael did not follow through with this suggestion.

The next morning, Katie brought a shell to the same group. She had located a picture of it in a reference book and included information in her presentation. She was aided by her teacher who read the name of the shell.

When the teacher works with one child, others may be listening.

Riddles and Answers: Listening Comprehension

It was five minutes before lunch time, and the children had just completed their work on a science lesson on animals. "Everyone listen closely," Miss Apteker said. "We're going to play 'What Am I?' I am a large furry animal who walks on four legs. I live in cold lands. I like to swim and I eat fish."

A way to make these "extra" minutes have a purpose

"I know," said Gwen, "it's a seal."

Harry objected. "No, it isn't, because seals don't have fur."

"Oh, yes, they do," countered Gwen. "My mother has a fur coat and it's made out of seal skin. I've felt it."

"Well, they don't look furry anyway," Harry replied, "because I've seen them at the zoo and they look all smooth in the water."

"Maybe some furs are smooth while others look and feel very shaggy," suggested Miss Apteker. "How about the riddle, then? Is the answer 'a seal'?"

What did the teacher learn about the listening habits of these children?

"No," Mark said quite definitely, "because you said, 'I walk on four legs,' and that couldn't be a seal."

"What then?" Miss Apteker asked.

"A caribou?" Mark questioned. "You said it lives in cold places."

"But caribous don't eat fish," Gwen said disdainfully.

"Oh, yeah," said Mark, "I forgot about that. Maybe you'd better repeat the whole riddle, Miss Apteker, could you?"

What can be done to promote progress in listening skills?

Miss Apteker had barely finished repeating it when Gwen and Mark simultaneously shouted, "A polar bear!"

Things To Think About - Unit II

1. Consider the problems of attention and interest and their relation to listening.

2. Consider the ways in which the materials used and the subject matter being studied affect one's listening purposes.

3. What activities can you think of to encourage good listening habits?

4. How directly does listening relate to reading?

   Can a poor listener be a good reader?

   Can a good listener be a poor reader?

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THE CHILD

Talks

As an infant, a child experiments with sounds and seeks to imitate people with whom he has contact. He is constantly encouraged in these attempts. Every new expression is received with outward signs of approval.

By the time most children enter school, they have acquired a serviceable vocabulary and have learned to express their thoughts in various language patterns. The unique perceptions of each child are reflected in the depth of meaning that he conveys orally. Often a child does not know what he perceives unless he talks about it.

As children are directly involved in rich, diversified, and stimulating school experiences, there must be much discussion and clarification of terms. Experience needs language to give it shape. Language needs experience to give it content.

A child's oral vocabulary and the power to manipulate language are basic to the development and expression of his ideas. These ideas expressed orally form the background for understanding what he reads.

When's the Time to Tell?

The children were grouped on the floor around the teacher's rocking chair. She was reading them a Babar book. From time to time, she interrupted her reading to ask or answer a question.

"What's a pastry shop?" Rose asked.

"Do you know what a shop is?" asked Mrs. Frank.

Shawn answered, "It's a place where they iron fenders. That's where my daddy works. In a shop."

The rest of the children looked bewildered. Mrs. Frank invited them to look at the picture which accompanied the account of Babar's visit to a pastry shop. The children discussed the picture.

Discussion enriches and extends understandings.

"It looks like a store. There's the thing they put the money in."

"That's a cash register."

"They've got shelves with pies and doughnuts on."

"I bet it's a doughnut shop."

"Doughnut shops have only doughnuts."

"Then it's a bakery. That's where my mommy buys pies."

"And there's cake."

"---and bread."

Mrs. Frank raised her hand and the children gradually became quiet.

"Where do you go with your mother to buy pies, Albert?"

"We go to the bakery," Albert answered importantly.

"Now who can tell us what they call a bakery in this story," Mrs. Frank asked.

Several hands waved.

When the matter of the pastry shop had been settled, Mrs. Frank resumed reading. Later she held the book open to a full page illustration and asked, "Would you say that this is a picture of an old elephant or a young elephant?"

What reading skills can be strengthened through picture interpretation?

"He's the biggest one."

"He looks like he's kinda' sick."

"He don't look very strong."

"He's wearin' glasses."

"His skin's all bumpy. He's not smooth like Babar."

They all decided that the elephant was old and were pleased when Mrs. Frank read the author's description which corroborated their decision. The story continued when suddenly Tommy exclaimed, "Boy! Babar looks pretty sick!"

"What makes you think he's sick?" asked Mrs. Frank.

"'Cause his face is green," Tommy replied.

"Aw---you don't turn green when you're sick," Albert scoffed. "When I had measles I was red!"

"I don't mean sick like that," Tommy explained. "I mean sick at his stomach. He looks like he's gonna' throw up."

"I don't get green and neither does my brother. When my brother throws up, he gets white-looking," Albert insisted.

"Well, maybe you don't really turn green when you throw up," Tommy slowly conceded, "but, boy! you feel green!"

A keen sense of verbalizing a feeling!

The children were exposed to:

1. Sharing understandings gained through personal experience
2. Understanding that different words can be used to express the same idea
3. Looking at pictures that were rich in opportunities for extending meaning

The teacher learned:

Rose interrupted our story, but her question seemed appropriate. I can take advantage of such cues by affording the children opportunities to react and exchange ideas. The development of picture-reading skills enables children to sharpen their perception, make inferences, and draw valid conclusions.

Little Things Can Mean A Lot

The children were gathered together the first week of school for opening exercises. After the flag salute and a patriotic song, the teacher said, "Amy, would you like to share what you brought from home?" A small girl made her way to the front and announced in a low voice, "I got this thing." She held up a toy coffeepot.

Several children raised their hands to indicate they hadn't heard what she had said.

"What is the name of your 'thing'?" asked the teacher, who was sitting beside the child.

Amy looked uncomfortable, hung her head low, and held the coffeepot higher.

"Do you know what to call your new toy?" asked the teacher.

The child nodded affirmatively.

"Can you tell me what it is?"

"Mommy has one."

By this time almost all of the group had their hands up. However, the child seemed oblivious to this and continued to center her attention on the teacher.

"Is your mommy's just like this one?" the teacher probed gently.

"It's bigger," the little girl admitted, "and it pours real coffee." She appeared to have gained some confidence, because she spoke in a voice loud enough to be heard by most of the group as evidenced by the number of hands that were lowered.

"What does your mommy call hers?"

The child smiled and said, "A coffeepot."

"So, what is your 'thing'?" The teacher smiled back at the child.

"It's a toy coffeepot."

The teacher for the first time turned her attention to the entire group. "Can you tell all your friends what you are holding?"

The little girl held the pot toward the group and in her soft voice said, "This is a toy coffeepot." She returned to her place with a smile on her face.

What benefits to the child (and to the listeners) does the teacher hope will accrue from this experience?

What Can the Matter Be?

Marianne is four. Her brother, Frank, who in the second grade, has a negative attitude toward reading. Their mother was discussing Frank's troubles with a friend who is a first grade teacher. She wanted to know if there was anything she could do to help Frank. "And is there something I can do so that when Marianne goes to school she won't have the same difficulty?" she asked.

The teacher knew that the mother saw to the comfort and health of her children but, because of an overloaded social calendar, could find few opportunities to talk with - or read to - the children.

The teacher had also observed that Marianne was a very quiet child. She talked very little and then only in response to direct questions. She usually spoke in monosyllables or fragmented sentences. The teacher explained to the mother why facility in self-expression is an essential part of the reading process. She suggested that she and Marianne and her mother take a walk in a nearby woods and that she would try to demonstrate ways in which the mother could encourage Marianne to think and to express her thoughts in a more adequate fashion.

A step in the right direction

The child plodded silently along beside her mother, displaying no interest in the autumn surroundings.

The teacher stopped and picked up a large dark-red oak leaf. Calling the child to her, she said, "Marianne, look at this leaf. Isn't it lovely?"

Marianne took the leaf and turned it over and over. Suddenly she darted off the path, picked up a small bright-yellow mitten-shaped sassafras leaf and handed it to the teacher.

The teacher cleared a space on a large rock and laid the leaves side by side.

"Which leaf do you think is the prettier, Marianne?" she asked.

Marianne pointed to the yellow leaf.

"I like that one better, too!" the teacher exclaimed. "I wonder if you can tell me something?" She pointed to the leaves, "Are these two alike?" She expected the child to answer, "No." Instead Marianne nodded.

"How are they alike?" the teacher smiled.

"Leaves," Marianne whispered.

"You're right! Now let's see if we can find anything different about them," the teacher said.

The teacher accepts and learns from unexpected answers but does not lose sight of her goal.

Marianne looked and looked. At last she said, "The little one is the color of my new dress."

"What color is the other one?" Marianne's mother asked.

Marianne picked up a red leaf from the ground and placed it over the red oak leaf on the rock.

"What's the name of the color?" the mother asked sharply.

"Blue?" the little girl said hesitantly.

The teacher said quickly, "Marianne, let's take the leaves back with us and show them to Frank. Let's see if he can tell us how they are alike--and how they are different."

Why was it best to end this lesson suddenly? When should most lessons end?

Marianne raced up the path with the leaves in her hand. The mother and the teacher proceeded more slowly as the teacher again emphasized the importance of oral expression to the reading process.

The mother was so concerned about Marianne's incorrect answer that she paid little attention. She kept repeating, "I'm sure she knows her colors! Why did she say 'blue'? Well, now I know one thing to teach her. She certainly should know her colors by now."

They caught up with Marianne as they neared the house. She had collected four or five more leaves. All of them were different. As they watched, she picked up and examined several others before she found one that satisfied her requirements. The intent searching - the satisfied smile - gave evidence to the teacher that the child was thinking and learning. The mother hurried away, as she was already late for an appointment.

"I won't forget what you said," she called back to the teacher. "I'll get busy right away and teach her the names for the colors."

Parrot Talk

The class was discussing what problems the astronauts might have as the Gemini Ten circled the earth far above them.

"They must be awful tired," Linda offered. "Mommy says she'd be too nervous to sleep."

"My daddy said they picked men to be astronauts who don't get nervous," Tim offered.

"Well, I guess they'd be nervous anyhow, being up there so long," Linda said firmly. "They might be worrying about whether a meteorite might hit them any minute. By the way," she asked the teacher, "what is a meteorite, anyhow?"

The teacher asked if anyone in the class could answer Linda's question. No one was able to do so. The teacher then defined "meteorite" in short simple terms and suggested that those interested might like to do some further research.

What factors might determine the way in which a teacher answers a child's question?

Touch and Tell

James, Judy, and Michelle were seated in front of their teacher while the other class members were involved with independent activities. Their teacher had a large paper bag with an object inside. The top of the bag was taped shut, and the bag was opaque. "What Can You Tell About It?" was written on chart paper in front of the three pupils. Each pupil was then permitted to feel the object through the bag and was asked to give a characteristic of the object which he could determine by feeling.

Judy said, "It has a wire on it."

Michelle said, "It has a handle."

James said, "It's hard."

Children use language to convey tactile sensation.

Each sentence, as stated by the pupil, was written on the chart paper.

The children were given another opportunity to feel the object and asked to state any additional characteristics. Michelle added, "It's shaped like a circle," which was added to the chart.

The bag was removed and the object revealed. The children examined it and compared their sight observations with their touch observations as recorded on the chart. They were pleased when the two types of observations tallied.

Why is it important for children to learn to check on the reliability of their own observations?

Things To Think About - Unit III

1. Operation Alert!

   Today's children are bombarded with verbal symbols which they may repeat with little or no understanding.

2. Can the manner in which children acquire pre-school vocabularies and speech patterns give teachers a clue as to ways they can facilitate language growth?

3. What personal experience can you recall in which lack of opportunity to verbalize thoughts caused misconceptions and a loss of interest?

References

Veatch, Jeanette. Reading In The Elementary School. New York: Ronald Press Co., 1966.
See: "Using Oral Language in Reading Instruction," p. 237.
"Dialects No Barrier," p. 249.

THE CHILD

Expresses His Ideas in Writing

A child should "write" before he reads - in the sense that he should see his own talk translated into written words before he attempts to read the printed words of others which he must turn back into speech.

The relationship between sounds and visual symbols is more easily grasped when the child has many opportunities to observe the teacher record his ideas in written form. He "slips" effortlessly into reading as the vocabulary and concepts he first reconstructs are his very own.

The child who has had limited opportunities to express his ideas verbally will be the child who has difficulty in expressing his ideas in written form.

The child who has "nothing to say" will be the child who takes little interest in acquiring the skills which will permit him to record his ideas in writing.

On the other hand, the child who "slips" effortlessly into writing will be the child who has gained proficiency in oral expression and is eager to acquire the same proficiency in written expression. As he works towards this goal, he discovers what he needs to learn in order to facilitate his purpose: spelling - capitalization - punctuation - sentence patterns - all receive their rightful share of attention when the child can see how they aid him in communicating his thoughts in more exact, meaningful ways.

"Writing Maketh An Exact Man"

"Mrs. Walcutt," asked Laurie, "how would you describe a little bitty man?"

Laurie and Mrs. Walcutt were discussing a story Laurie was writing. They were seated at the "writing table" where a plentiful supply of paper, pencils, erasers, and dictionaries was available for those children who chose to write a story.

The teacher had noticed Laurie's interest in writing in the very first days of the school year. In the beginning, Laurie was satisfied to make simple captions for her drawings; but as the year progressed, her need to express her thoughts in writing became stronger and stronger, until now, in early spring, she spent some part of each school day "drawing pictures with words." Mrs. Walcutt had nurtured Laurie's self-expression by frequent conferences in which they discussed the varied ways in which a thought could be expressed.

"It isn't enough to say he's 'little'," Laurie went on. "My baby sister is 'little' and the man in my story is going to be much littler than her."

Talking clarifies ideas before writing.

"We read a poem last week that had a good word for 'very little' in it," Mrs. Walcutt reminded her.

Laurie pondered for a few minutes. "Oh, you mean *Tiny Tim*. But, Mrs. Walcutt, that writer was telling about a real person. *My* man is gonna' be *so* small, so very, very little, you'd probably need a microscope to see him."

"Could you use a describing word along with 'small'?" Mrs. Walcutt suggested. "You just said 'very, very little'."

Too much or too little suggestion from the teacher?

But Laurie was not satisfied with any of Mrs. Walcutt's suggestions. Together they made a list of terms they both knew meant 'little' and Laurie tried various word combinations. At the conclusion of the conference, she was still searching for a way to express to her own satisfaction the image she was carrying in her mind.

How about a relationship that leaves the student free to reject the teacher's suggestions?

Later in the day during independent reading activities, Laurie went to the library corner to search for a new book. She spent considerable time scanning the shelves before finally choosing *The Enormous Egg*. Seating herself in one of the small rockers, she began reading to herself. She read only a few pages and then began gazing dreamily out of the window. She continued to daydream, rocking quietly back and forth, until a friend reminded her it was time for afternoon recess.

Time to think.

Upon returning to the room she went directly to the writing table, wrote a single sentence, and joined the group which was listening to Mrs. Walcutt read a story.

At the conclusion of the story, Mrs. Walcutt remarked, "Well, Laurie, I can see from the smile on your face that you found a way to describe your 'little man'."

Laurie nodded and handed Mrs. Walcutt a sheet of paper on which was written, "Mr. Bottom was an enormously tiny man."

Laurie experienced:

1. Teacher's support and respect
2. Satisfaction of expressing her thoughts the way she wanted to
3. Growth of her power to express her thoughts

The teacher thought:

This child comes to me with questions but actually uses me as a sounding board. She can be relied on to make up her own mind.

I am doing the right thing in giving her time and opportunity to work things out for herself.

In what other areas of the curriculum can Laurie be given more independence? How?

I Write As I Please

A class had decided to make individual booklets on "Very Important People" as a part of their social studies unit on community helpers.

They had already made walk-on streets and walk-in buildings representing the Silver Spring area. The map had been set up in the art center. It filled over three-fourths of the room. Streets had been cut and shaped from rolled wrapping paper, and the buildings had been constructed from large corrugated boxes.

From their study, the children had been able to identify individuals within their community that they felt were indispensable: firemen, policemen, druggists, postmen, librarians, etc.

Most of the children were capable of writing their own paragraphs describing the way they felt about the particular VIP's they had selected. They consulted a large class chart of key words, individual word lists, picture dictionaries; or they simply "spelled by ear" the way words sounded to them. Mrs. Boyer encouraged the children to use the latter method as much as possible.

Provision was made for self-help.

The teacher recorded for those children who were not yet ready to work alone. These children watched as Mrs. Boyer wrote down their talking, and then each read their talking back to her.

The twenty-eight booklets were in all stages of construction. Some children were composing; some were compiling tables of contents; some were designing covers; and some were measuring or punching holes prior to final assembly.

Each child was permitted to choose the materials he would use for his booklet, so there was some variation in size, color, and shape. The children were also free to write about those individuals who interested them in as lengthy or as brief a way as they wished. Some children had as many as twenty pages in their booklets, and some had only two.

The following are some examples of written expression by those children who were working independently.

1. My Doctor is nise. My Doctor gevs me shots. If your not bad he will gev you a pop. He takes My tinsos out. He gevs me pils and he gevs me madasin. He makes me helpty.

Letting the writing flow.

2. Are school is neat. I surely like it becaus there are 28 children in are room. I like them all. I like are library teacher she is the prettist lady I now.

3. It was so fun on our transportation to the museum boy what fun we had a great time

Below is an example of a dictated story.

A fireman puts fires out. A fireman rides a red truck. Sometimes the fireman has to go in the house to put the fire out. I like firemen!

Some children need a scribe.

As They Talk, So Shall They Write

A chart of incorrect sentences taken from the children's own work had been made by the teacher, who did not reveal the source of the sentences to the children.

What outcomes are expected from this kind of discussion?

"Mrs. Singer, you goofed," Mary Ann said as the two boys and three girls brought their chairs together for a directed language lesson.

"Oh? In what way?" Mrs. Singer responded.

Mary Ann pointed to the first sentence--

"You don't ride *in* a horse. You ride *on* a horse."

Mrs. Singer smiled. "Would you like to correct it?" Mary Ann used the magic marker, crossed out the "in" and wrote "on" above it. "Now let's see whether the sentence reads correctly," the teacher went on.

John read aloud, "Billy Cody ride*s* on a horse."

"He said 'rides' and the word is 'ride' on the chart," Nelson observed.

"Can I put the 's' on 'ride', Mrs. Singer?" John asked.

"I wouldn't do that," objected Edith. "'Cause Bill Cody doesn't ride now--he *rode* a long time ago."

"Use your best judgment, John," Mrs. Singer suggested. "Which would make the best message to a reader? 'Billy Cody rides on a horse' or 'Billy Cody rode on a horse'?"

John thought a minute. "I guess 'rode'," he admitted. He crossed out "ride" and wrote "rode" very slowly as he sounded out the "r-o-d." After comparing what he had written with "ride," he added "e."

He stepped back and surveyed what he had written and then read the sentence silently. Without asking permission, he suddenly crossed out the "y" on "Billy."

Ideas shape the form of language.

"What did you do that for?" Mary Ann asked indignantly.

"I don't think Bill Cody would like us to call him 'Billy'," John replied. "'Billy' makes him sound like a little kid."

The other boys agreed, but Mary Ann was not convinced. "Davy Crockett didn't seem to mind," she muttered.

Edith suddenly interrupted. "Mrs. Singer, did you write that sentence wrong on purpose?"

"She didn't write that sentence," Nelson giggled. "She copied it from a paper of mine."

How will this assure a continuing desire to write?

The children read the remaining sentences with a great deal of interest; and as they corrected their own mistakes, there was much good-natured banter.

The last sentence, "The fire was the most!", caused them some difficulty. They couldn't see anything wrong with it.

"Well," Mrs. Singer said, "you haven't told the reader anything about the fire really. The fire was the most what?"

"The fire was the most," Edith tried to explain. "It was the biggest."

"The greatest," Nelson offered.

"It was the wildest, biggest, greatest fire ever," Mary Ann contributed.

"Oh!" Mrs. Singer laughed. "I see! The fire was the most! All right! I stand corrected. Honestly," she added, "you kids are the most!"

"The Words are Mine!"

Mrs. Melvin's class had been working on the concepts of "what," "when," and "where."

This afternoon the class had been divided into four activity groups. Mrs. Melvin was seated in one corner with a group of five boys. They had read a story silently and were now rereading to find where statements -- under the bush, across the grass, etc.

Another group of three was writing down information as to where objects were located in the room. The objects were described but not named. They planned to read the descriptions to the class to see whether their classmates could identify what the object was. For example: "I am sitting on the biggest table. I am round and mostly blue."

Evaluate these activities as preparation for writing.

Another group was pasting words and phrases under the correct heading. One child's finished paper looked like this:

What	When	Where
a blue ball	Tuesday	under the chair
a pretty girl	October	on the bookcase
a tall boy	autumn	around the tree
a little baby	six o'clock	down the street

Restrictive activities restrict creativity.

Four children were engaged in the same activity, but at a more difficult level. Their papers looked like this:

What	When	Where
a poem	next weekend	through the rain
a number line	later in the day	under the earth
a smile	day after tomorrow	high in the sky
a purple cow	soon	over the rainbow

The remaining group of three girls was skimming through library books, finding and recording words and phrases which they copied under the appropriate designated categories.

Jean had been working on this activity. She couldn't wait for her teacher to discuss her work with her the next day, so she elected to stay after school.

She "elected" to stay?

Mrs. Melvin noted that Jean's paper was very messy, not at all like her usual precise neat work. But when she read what Jean had written down, she exclaimed, "These are such lovely things! Which books did you use?" And she read aloud, "a bubbling baby - a wet green morning - a sunny soft lawn------."

"I used pictures in the books," Jean answered, "but the words are mine!"

Still Waters Run Deep

It was the day before Thanksgiving vacation. The second grade children had decided to make Thanksgiving pictures using a variety of media. They also were going to write individual stories about things for which they were thankful.

"You know, Mrs. Bramwell, what would be a good idea to do?" Alice suddenly suggested. "Couldn't we write a thankful letter? A thank-you letter?"

"We don't know how to write a letter. Mrs. Bramwell didn't show us how yet," objected Diane.

"Would some of you like to write a thank-you letter?" Mrs. Bramwell asked.

When motivation is strong, ambition often exceeds ability. What about the problems this raises for teachers?

Five girls indicated that they would. Mrs. Bramwell suggested they make a rough copy of what they wanted to say. She would help them with the correct form when they were ready to make a finished copy.

Ideas precede form.

While the children were occupied with their writing and varied art activities, they were quiet. Each was getting a chance to talk on the tape recorder. The subject they had chosen was "What I Like Best About Thanksgiving Dinner."

Recorded expression can involve more than words on paper.

The following morning Mrs. Bramwell met with the groups of girls who had elected to write thank-you letters. The girls had each addressed envelopes. Kim, a very quiet, shy boy, asked if he could join the group.

Mrs. Bramwell gave each child a sample copy of a friendly letter, and they discussed the reason for putting the sender's address in the upper left-hand corner of the page. Spelling and punctuation mistakes were also explained and corrected as Mrs. Bramwell went over the girls' letters. Mary had written her grandmother; Lisa, an aunt; Lucy and Gretchen, their mothers; and Micki, her father.

Kim waited until the girls had returned to their seats before handing Mrs. Bramwell his letter.

"You can bring in your envelope tomorrow, Kim," Mrs. Bramwell began, when Kim sadly interrupted, "I'll have to write another letter. I didn't know you had to mail it."

Mrs. Bramwell had read Kim's letter while he was talking.

"You don't have to write another 'thank-you', Kim," she said. "I'm sure your letter will arrive without being mailed."

(Kim's letter appears on the next page.)

God,
I thank you for our food
and water and cloths
Thank you for our pets to
but we need help because
our water and air has been
polluted.

Kim Sanders

Things To Think About - Unit IV

1. What, in your opinion, are the reciprocal relationships between:
    a) Writing and reading?
    b) Writing and listening?
    c) Writing and speaking?

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2

THE CHILD

Feels Competent

A child who identifies himself as an individual of dignity, value, and worth is a child who has had many opportunities to feel pleased with his performance.

The more a child feels liked, wanted, accepted, able, and important, the greater will be his drive toward exploring, communicating, and manipulating his environment.

A child must be helped through successful personal experiences to see himself as an increasingly competent person. Such experiences maintain and support his strivings toward increasingly adequate means of self-expression and toward participation in new activities which he identifies as worthwhile and from which he derives feelings of efficiency.

Classroom laboratories must afford opportunities in which each child's needs are alternately stimulated and satisfied. Continual intellectual and emotional growth take place when the child's environment is high in challenge and low in threat.

Follow the Lead

Mrs. Wilder concluded from her observations of the past three weeks that the new influence on the lives of her children was no passing fancy. Batman was the topic of earnest conversation during lunch and recess time.

The child who seemed to be the most obsessed with this new hero was Marvin, the boy who created problems for teachers and students alike - Marvin, the boy who couldn't (or wouldn't) read or write.

What could have caused Marvin's attitude?

On Tuesday afternoon, when it was Marvin's time to read independently with her, Mrs. Wilder suggested that he might like to dictate a story instead. Marvin looked suspicious. "Are we goin' on a trip?" he demanded.

Mrs. Wilder looked surprised.

"We always write a dumb story about a trip," Marvin said.

"We write stories about other things, too," Mrs. Wilder reminded him.

"Yeh! But always about things we do," Marvin sullenly answered.

"And you don't like to write about yourself?" Mrs. Wilder inquired.

"They're dumb stories!" Marvin retorted. "Just like the stories in these dumb books." He angrily waved his assigned primer.

"What kind of a story would you like to write?" Mrs. Wilder asked. Marvin didn't answer. She added, "You can choose anything you wish."

Marvin looked at his clenched hands in his lap. "You'd probably think a Batman story would be dumb," he muttered. "Mom said that school was no place for Batman."

"I'll tell you, Marvin. I don't know whether Batman's 'dumb' - as you put it - or not. I've never watched the program. But, I don't think there would be anything 'dumb' in your writing a story about him."

The teacher is tuned to the right channel!

So while Marvin watched, Mrs. Wilder wrote down his words:

"Batman catches crooks. Crooks are bad people. Batman is the best crime-fighter. He is after the Catwoman. Robin helps him. Batman is a good man. Batman's name when he is not fighting is Bruce Wayne, the millionaire. Robin is really Dick Grayson."

Marvin was able to read most of his story aloud. He wanted to share it with Terry, his best friend, and when he read it a second time he hesitated over only a few words.

Marvin was busy the rest of the afternoon. He shared his story with several other children and spent the remainder of the time laboriously writing something on a piece of construction paper. Mrs. Wilder was curious, but Marvin was so engrossed in what he was doing she felt it best not to interrupt.

Her curiosity was satisfied, however, when at the end of the school day Marvin handed her the piece of paper on which he had been working. It was folded and stapled in several places. After handing it to Mrs. Wilder, Marvin turned and bolted from the room.

Marvin on his own initiative had written a letter! It read:

What next?

Der Mrs. Wilder

Plese wath Batman tonite. You will like Batman and Robin. He is the best crime fighter. Plese wach Batman. Your truly frend
Marvin

Marvin experienced:

1. An opportunity to talk about a special interest
2. Seeing his own words put into written form
3. Reading his "written down talk"
4. A desire to write on his own

The teacher thought:

Marvin has hostile feelings. He needs many opportunities to express these feelings. He must be made to feel that his interests and ideas are acceptable. A conference with his parents might serve to point up the relationship between home interests and school activities. If I can maintain his motivation, he will be reading before he realizes it.

Slipping into Reading

Dick was inattentive and seemed to have little interest in learning to read. During the first month of school, he rarely volunteered. If called upon, his response was scarcely audible. His teacher noticed that he spent much time watching the activities of a caged mouse or in minutely examining the insect specimens. By conferring with the kindergarten teacher, she determined that he had consistently exhibited this type of behavior the previous school year.

During a conference with both parents, she discovered that Dick had a four-year-old sister who was "very bright" and "chattered incessantly." A baby sister also claimed a great deal of the mother's attention. The teacher suggested that the younger children's schedule be arranged so that Dick could have a half-hour each evening in which he would not have to share his parents' attention. She also informed them that his main interest at the present time seemed to be in living things.

The parents were most cooperative. They expressed surprise at their own inability to see Dick's need. The father explained, "He's such a

Teacher sincerity inspires parent confidence.

good, quiet boy. We never thought his quietness might be a problem."

Two days after the parent conference, Dick was observed racing up the hill to the school, holding a glass jar in one hand and waving a sheet of paper in the other.

Upon entering the classroom, he said to the teacher, "Miss Timmy, there's a cricket in this jar. And this is a story about him. Daddy and I wrote it together."

"Would you like to share it with the class?" Miss Timmy suggested.

Dick shook his head from side to side.

"Would you like to share it with your reading group?" After short consideration, Dick nodded his assent.

After a short planning period with the entire class, the teacher called the six members of Dick's reading group to the science corner.

Motioning for Dick to come to the front of the assembled group, she told them, "Dick has brought a different kind of insect for us to see. If you think you know what it is, you may whisper to him. He will tell you if you are right."

One by one the children whispered their guesses in Dick's ear. It was apparent that none of them knew the name of Dick's specimen. He began to grin and finally burst into laughter as the last child guessed incorrectly.

"He's a cricket! I caught him on Mommy's sweater--and Daddy and I wrote about him." He held up his paper. "Here's what I said. And Daddy wrote down my words--'Jumper is a cricket. He has six legs. He is a insect."

"I didn't know you could read," one of the children said in a surprised voice.

There was sudden quiet and then Dick said, more to himself than to the group, "I didn't know I could either."

Reading is something a child may do unconsciously.

Reading Reveille

"Susan Jane will you read the duties chart for our visitor and explain it to her?" the teacher asked.

It was the week after Christmas vacation and the twenty-eight afternoon kindergarten children had reestablished the work and play routines that the holidays had interrupted.

Susan Jane looked inquiringly at the visitor. "Can't you read?" she asked in an interested voice.

"I can read some things on your chart, and there are some I can't read," the visitor smiled, "For instance. What does this say?" and she pointed to a milk carton which had been flattened and stapled to the chart.

"That means milk duty," replied Susan Jane. She pointed to the name opposite the carton with the end of a yardstick - "and Tommy gets to get the milk and pick someone to help him pass it out. _This_ week," she emphasized. "_Next_ week'll be somebody else's turn."

She went on down the list decoding each symbol and reading the child's name which accompanied each.

"This means door duty and Ralph gets to open and shut the inside and outside so he's always first in line this week."

How does language power reflect classroom atmosphere?

"This is 'chairs' and Freddie gets to put them up and take them down - and this is bell duty and Linda rings it when 'time's up' - and this is 'lights' and that's me," she grinned happily. "Susan Jane. _I_ get to turn the lights on and off."

Shirley "got to" place the appropriate symbols on the weather-graph; Dana "got to" mark the calendar; Willy "got to" operate the draw-drapes; and finally -- "This is the most important job of all -- this is '_boxes_' and that means that Louise has to be sure everything is put away in its right place."

"How did you learn to read all the children's names?" the visitor asked.

"Well -- I don't know." Susan Jane frowned and concentrated. "When we were little -- you know -- when we first came to school -- we had little cards with names on them -- and everybody wore one -- and then after awhile the teacher took them off and put them on the ledge and used the cards on charts and pretty soon I could tell the cards and the kids that went together. It wasn't hard," she confided. "And I'm glad I can read good because I can't draw so

One aspect of reading is remembering a symbol and its reference.

To each his own

good."

"Thank you very much, Susan Jane. I understand the chart now. You've helped me very much," the visitor said.

Susan Jane blushed and ran across the room to return the yardstick to her teacher. "I showed the lady how to read, Miss Able," she reported.

Surprise! Surprise!

The second week of school, Michael was one of a small group of first grade children browsing in the classroom library. He examined several books before making a choice. He slowly turned the pages, examining each picture intently.

Mrs. Smith held individual conferences with the members of Michael's group. Michael was the last.

He volunteered as he settled beside Mrs. Smith, "I don't know the name of this book. I can't read."

"Do you know any of the words on the cover?" she asked.

"That one is 'dogs'," he replied, pointing to the word with one finger.

"Well, you can read, after all!" Mrs. Smith said smiling. "The name of this book is Too Many Dogs. I'll bet you can find other words you already know." She turned to the first page. "I'll bet you can figure out some words by looking at the picture."

"There's two dogs," Michael said, pointing to the picture. "Are two dogs too many for the man and the lady?"

"*Could* two dogs be too many?" asked the teacher.

Michael looked at the picture. "They might be," he said slowly. "In our apartment *one* dog would be too many."

What relationship does critical thinking have to reading?

Mrs. Smith shut the book with a smile and said, "Look at me, Michael. I'm going to tell you the names of these two dogs. Their names are 'Agnes' and 'Stella'."

She opened the book to the story page again and asked, "Can you find the name 'Agnes'?"

Michael pointed to the first word and said, "That one."

Mrs. Smith gave a surprised laugh. "How did you know?"

"Because Agnes starts with 'a' and that name starts with 'a.' The other name starts with 's'."

"My goodness, what a lot you know about reading!" Mrs. Smith said. Running her finger under the words, she read, "'Agnes and Stella lived with _______.'" She paused-----, "What do people call your daddy?"

Will Michael have to wait for others?

"Mr. Roberts."

"The name of the man in this story is Mr. White." Mrs. Smith pointed to "Mr. White" and read aloud.

"What do you think the lady's name is?" She pointed to the words, "Mrs. White."

"Mrs. White?" asked Michael pointing to the correct words.

"You're right! Do you see any difference between the word 'Mr.' and the word 'Mrs.'?"

Michael wrinkled his forehead. "They're the same, only different."

"You're right again! How are they different?" Mrs. Smith urged.

"One ends in 's'."

"Which word ends in 's'?"

Michael pointed.

When Michael had read "Mrs. White," Mrs. Smith asked him to read the first sentence. Mrs. Smith helped him with three words in the two sentences remaining on the page. He never had to be told the same word twice.

At the conclusion of the conference, he returned to his chair and reread the page in a low voice.

As the children were moving to a new activity, Mrs. Smith overheard a child say, "Michael, I can read the word 'mother'!"

"So what," Michael replied, "I can read a whole page!"

Things To Think About - Unit V

1. Can you think of a time when acceptance by others stimulated you to greater achievement?

2. Have you known many children whose learning efforts improved because of a pleasing experience?

3. Have you known some children whose learning has been impeded because they did not experience satisfaction in an activity?

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THE CHILD

Gives Clues to the Teacher

Each child responds to a learning environment in his own individual way. The teacher must wisely observe the child's responses: his smile -- his frown; a nod -- a shake of the head; many eager inquiries -- a few listless questions; a statement reflecting new insight -- an answer indicating lack of understanding.

As he interprets each reaction, the teacher responds with an appropriate question, comment, device, or suggestion which will increase the child's power or add to his growth.

No matter how many children a teacher has met, lived with, or taught, he cannot assume that he can anticipate responses to given stimuli. The clues he receives will always be unique in that they reflect understandings which are new at that time for that child.

The variations of children's needs can be honestly dealt with only if the teacher exerts all his professional effort towards perceiving the clues received from each child and in organizing the classroom so as to provide time for following through with appropriate instruction for each individual, singly or in groups. The basis for both types of instruction relies on teacher diagnosis of individual needs, interests, and abilities through clues given by each child.

Every child is always ready for his own next step. The teacher becomes an effective facilitator when he can interpret this clue and identify that step. He then can instigate activities which enable the child to take the step.

How Do I Know Thee?

Jeff was recording beginning sound on a work sheet. When the teacher gave this assignment, she had identified the pictures, had given specific directions, and had asked for questions. Jeff had gone back to his seat and without hesitation had filled in the first blank. Then he darted to a picture in the last column, then to the one at the bottom of the second column. He proceeded to fill in the rest of the blanks in random fashion.

Clues?

Below is a copy of Jeff's work which the teacher evaluated with him.

Picture	Answer	Teacher's Notes	Picture	Answer	Teacher's Notes
(jar)	q	(paste) (reversal)	(balloon)	b	
(pencil)	q	(reversal)	(desk)	T	(sound confusion)
(kite)	K		(handkerchief)	M	(map)
(girl)	e	(reversal)	(wagon)	W	
(milk bottle)	M		(zipper)	S	(sound confusion)
(fork)	F		(tent)	T	
(ring)	W	(speech problem)	(scissors)	C	(soft sound of "c"?)
			(nails)	W	(Jeff said he didn't want to leave a blank here)

Conference:

"What is the first picture, Jeff?", asked Mrs. Smith pointing to the jar.

"Paste," Jeff replied. "And the next one is a pencil -- and then a kite -- and then a girl -- and milk bottle and a fork -- wing -- balloon -- desk -- a map -- wagon -- zipper -- a tent -- scissors and -- I don't know what the last picture is."

"Why did you put a letter there?" the teacher asked.

"I didn't want to leave a blank space," Jeff replied. "You said to finish the paper before I could work on our jail house and I just put that there to finish it."

Whose purpose?

"What is that letter, Jeff?" Mrs. Smith asked, pointing to the "t" opposite the picture of a desk.

"I don't know what you call it, but Ted's name begins with it," Jeff offered.

"Can you tell me the names of the other letters on your paper, Jeff?"

Jeff correctly named all of the other letters.

"Tomorrow, let's see if we can find a way for you to remember the name of that one letter you don't know," Mrs. Smith suggested. "Maybe some of the other boys need to work on letter names too. You did a good job with this paper, Jeff, but there are two letters that are made incorrectly." She put a circle around the reversed "g." "Can you tell me what's wrong with this one?"

Next step?

"It's backwards," Jeff promptly replied.

A true diagnosis!

"Well! That was quick!" the teacher laughed.

"When I make them wrong, they're always backwards. I try to remember which way they go, but then I forget," Jeff admitted.

The teacher drew a "g" on a lined flash card. "You recognize the letter when you see it, Jeff, and you know its name and the sound it makes. Let's fasten this sample to the upper corner of your desk. You can keep it there as a reminder, and when you have to make 'g' it will be right there to help you."

Adequate prescription.

Jeff returned to his seat and spent the next few minutes fastening the teacher's sample card to his desk with a flourish.

The teacher observed:

1. Jeff has a reversal problem and needs help in letter formation. He must have many opportunities for activities involving eye-hand coordination, gross motor movement, and kinesthetic experiences.

2. Jeff needs more readiness for this type of follow-up activity. Our conference brought out that he did not have recall of all the picture names.

3. Jeff is showing sound confusion. He is not distinguishing between unvoiced and voiced sounds.

4. Jeff has a speech difficulty. He needs to have more related activities which will sharpen his listening powers (t-d, s-z).

Ready For His Next Step

Mrs. Watson's children excitedly discussed pictures of a lion cub. The cub had been photographed while riding in a car with several children, walking down a busy street on a leash, wrestling with a small boy, and raiding a refrigerator. The pictures were published without captions by an elementary newspaper.

When Mrs. Watson felt the children had discussed the pictures sufficiently, and difficult key words (leash, refrigerator, lioness) had been written on the blackboard, she instructed the children to put their newspapers away.

"Oh, Mrs. Watson! Aren't we going to write our own stories about the little lion?" Shiela protested.

As most of the children expressed a desire to write, Mrs. Watson reorganized her afternoon work. The children wrote their stories. As they completed them, Mrs. Watson called for private conferences and evaluated each child's story individually.

Good planning provides for flexibility!

The children had three art activities from which to choose while these conferences were being held. Some preferred, however, to play games, work puzzles, or read in books of their own choice.

During the final twenty minutes of the school day, those authors who wished to share read their stories to the class.

Shiela's story: The little Lion was name (read "named") Oliver. he Play (read "played") with the children they walked him on a leash. he liked to walk. and he lieed down sometime. he drink (read "drank") Milk from a bottle and they fed him. he liked them. the men (read "man") Took him home with him. the lady liked him. So did the men (read "man") the lady fed him food from the refrigerator and the Children took him rideing with them.

Teacher diagnosis:

Shiela used "-ed" suffixes correctly when speaking but is uncertain when to use them in written language.

When questioned, she knew that the beginning word of each sentence should be capitalized. I'll have her edit her own work for these errors from now on. For this skill, she can now assume responsibility.

She is confusing some written irregular verb and noun forms. Visual awareness of these differences should precede some listening lessons on short vowel sounds.

I think she is ready to form her own generalization about dropping the final "e" before adding "ing."

How would you do this?

Bill's story: They fed The cub. The NaMe of The cub is hugh. The Keeper Took The cub home. The Mather Couldn NOT Take Care of he. (read "him") he was bOrn IN The Zoo. he is a Cud. (read "cub") he is falso. They Took good care of him. he likes food. he eat (read "eats") To Much That (read "that's") Why he (read "his") SO fat. he biT a boy. The cub was palying game. (read "games")

Teacher diagnosis:

Bill does not seem to understand that stories follow a sequence. He had good ideas but records them in a random fashion. Maybe retelling familiar stories and enumerating what action comes first, second, third, will carry over into his own oral and written expression.

He needs work in recognizing when to add an "s" to written noun and verb forms. I'll have him read his story on tape and have him check his own spelling.

I wonder why he didn't use a lower case "t" even once? I must watch him more carefully. If he really doesn't know any form but the capital, we'll have to schedule some meetings with the group working on letter forms.

Would more exposure to teacher-written charts give better mental models of words?

Dana's story:

The man fed The CUbS The Car had a CUbinit

Teacher diagnosis:

I must provide Dana with more experience that will help him use the correct relative size of letters. (Constant acquaintance with words and meaningful reproduction of them will correct his misuse of upper and lower case.)

I wonder if his school work is causing him to be tense? I think we'll wait awhile before beginning work on his spacing.

Dewey's story: (non-reader)

"I lost my paper, Mrs. Watson, but I can remember what I wrote on it. The tiger was a baby. The mother didn't love it. I took care of it."

*Teacher diagnosis:

Dewey has somehow been made to feel that he must fib about his inability to read and write. I must try to get him interested in building or making something -- maybe he would like to start a terrarium or take care of an animal and dictate his experiences to me about them? I must plan to spend more time talking with him. He is unable to identify most familiar wild animals, but he's very interested in them. I can have him make labels for animal pictures to help build a vocabulary. Some of the other children seem to have the same problem. I'll plan discussions emphasizing the similarities and differences in sizes, shapes, and colors (use pictures of animals) and follow through with a simple dramatization set to music. (The Camel Who Went for a Walk)

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*Many teachers develop their own shorthand as they diagnose on the spot.

Listen! And You Shall Hear

Monday afternoon the children were organized into four language activity groups; Group One was gathered around a listening station to hear a story about a rabbit who had a problem: Group Two was at the art center where each child was to draw a picture of something he had found to be a problem for him; Group Three gathered around the puzzle-game-toy center where each child was to choose an object for play; and Group Four was in the library corner where each child was to browse among the books. At the conclusion of an allotted period of time, the groups were to rotate at a signal from one learning center to another in a pupil-teacher-planned progression.

Why do you think this assignment was given to Group Two?

What provisions can be made for the child who is not ready to respond to the signal?

Benji was a member of the fourth group. He selected Favorite Stories and began to look through it.

The teacher noticed that Benji seemed to be leafing through his book aimlessly and she asked him to bring his book to her. She turned to the first story, "The Lion and the Mouse." Together they identified the animals and discussed the action in several of the pictures.

"Benji, since the lion allowed the mouse to go free, how do you think the mouse might be able to help the lion?" Mrs. Smith asked.

Benji's only reply was a blank look.

Mrs. Smith rephrased her question. Since Benji seemed unable to reply, she suggested that he look at the remaining pictures to see if the mouse found a way to help the lion. Benji returned to his chair and began looking through his book.

Mrs. Smith noticed that Benji had turned beyond the pictures which answered the question she had given him earlier.

She walked to where he was seated. "Have you found out how the mouse helped the lion, Benji?" she asked.

Benji kept his head down and did not reply.

"What happened to the lion, Benji?" she then asked.

Still there was no answer from Benji.

Taking the book from Benji's hands, Mrs. Smith turned to the pictures which showed the lion caught in a net. She repeated her question and Benji answered. "He's caught."

"You're right! He _is_ caught. He's caught in a trap. What do you think the trap is made of?" Mrs. Smith traced the outline of the net sections.

"Stone?" Benji answered in an uncertain voice.

Why did Benji give this answer?

After several unsuccessful attempts to get Benji to identify the material as "rope," Mrs. Smith gave him the answer.

"Now think, Benji. How could a tiny little mouse help a great big lion out of a rope trap?" Mrs. Smith urged.

Benji looked at the picture long and earnestly. He did not seem aware of the picture on the facing page which answered the question.

Mrs. Smith finally directed his attention to the picture and Benji said, "He's chewing it."

Mrs. Smith nodded approvingly. "How will chewing the rope help the lion?" she probed.

On the basis of what the teacher has learned, what activities would seem appropriate for Benji?

Benji was unable to reply. He apparently had lost interest in the discussion so Mrs. Smith quietly closed the book and asked him to ring the signal bell.

Things To Think About - Unit VI

1. Do you believe that the teacher's observations of a child, communication with a child, and diagnosis of his work can give a more rounded and accurate picture of his progress than a standardized test?

2. If we accept a child at his own level of readiness and with his own rate of growth, he becomes not a problem -- but a challenge!

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THE CHILD

Follows Clues Given By The Teacher

Every child challenges the creative teacher to seek out the connections between what he, the learner, knows and what the teacher recognizes as his next step toward what he is expected to learn.

A teacher must learn to deal constructively with topics introduced by learners and also must make content available which might not otherwise come into the experience of the individuals in a specific class. Explaining the new in terms of the familiar is one step in developing content and the meaningful extension of the child's embryonic concepts.

The teacher must help each child develop the necessary skills and attitudes which will enable him to secure information and to use information in effective creative ways.

Learning is continuous when the perceptive teacher provides experiences from which each child can extract meanings consistent with his own immediate requirements. Learning is supported and extended when the perceptive teacher provides the needed experiences which will enable each child to take another stride toward independence.

Ideas Take Shape

Mrs. Cook's class had made a Christmas tree for their bulletin board. The children were discussing ways to make appropriate decorative ornaments to hang from the branches which reached out into the room.

Purpose of activity?

"Circles cut from colored paper and decorated with glitter would look like Christmas tree balls," Marianne said. "We made them like that last year."

"I think they should be round," Lillian objected.

Marianne stared at her. "Circles are round --?"

"No, they're not. They're flat," stated Lillian. "Can't we make them round?" she asked the teacher.

"I think we can make ornaments many ways," smiled Mrs. Cook. "But we seem to be having a problem with the word 'round.' Alex, would you say a circle is round?" she asked.

"Sure, a circle's round," Alex agreed. "But Lillian means she wants to make things like balls."

"Are balls round?" the teacher asked again.

"They're round all around," offered Lillian.

Everyone laughed and then watched as Mrs. Cook wrote two words on the blackboard -- disc -- sphere.

Time to go from misconception to understanding.

"We need to know two new words so we will all know exactly what we are talking about." The teacher pointed to the word "disc." "Can you read this word?"

"It looks almost like 'dish'," Ray offered. "Does the 'c' sound like 'k'?"

Mrs. Cook nodded.

"Oh, then, it's 'disc'," Ray enunciated clearly.

"Ray read the word correctly and gave you a hint as to what 'disc' refers to," Mrs. Cook said. There was silence as the children thought.

"He said the word looked like 'dish'," she urged the children.

"Does 'disc' mean 'dish'?" asked Marianne.

"A particular kind of dish," assented Mrs. Cook.

"I know! A plate! And a plate looks like Marianne's circle," Teddy exclaimed.

Mrs. Cook complimented Teddy on his good thinking.

After she was sure the children understood what a "disc" was, Mrs. Cook turned to "sphere." When the children could not sound the word, she helped them. "'p' and 'h' together sound like 'f'." They tried to fit the sound in the word. "S--f--here; s--f--here; s-f-ere---."

Mrs. Cook's sharp ear caught Lillian's correct pronunciation.

"That's right, Lillian! Say it for the rest of the class," she asked.

Lillian said, "Sphere," and the other children practiced until most could say it fairly easily.

"What could we do to help us remember and use these two terms correctly?" Mrs. Cook asked.

Several suggestions were offered. The children finally voted to find samples of discs and spheres among their own toys and household items and make a classroom display.

New concepts become internalized through follow-up activities.

"Now, let's get back to the subject we started with," Mrs. Cook said. "How shall we decorate our Christmas tree?"

"I'm going to make cir---discs from colored paper and decorate them with glitter," Marianne grinned.

"You can make discs if you want to," Lillian agreed. "But I'm going to make spheres."

The children were exposed to:

1. Developing skill in differentiating objects through comparison and contrast
2. Using a learned fact to acquire new knowledge
3. Broadening a concept as they manipulated language and explored ideas

The teacher wondered:

Did the children get enough from this discussion to make it worthwhile? Do I let the children talk too much? I feel that some concepts concerning shapes were clarified. Developing and strengthening concepts is so important to language facility and reading, it seems to me one should take advantage of such opportunities in real situations.

Clearing the Air

"Humidity," Mrs. Clark wrote on the blackboard. She turned to the four children who comprised one of the science interest-groups. "Can anyone read that word for me?"

The children studied the word, moving their lips in an attempt to sound it out. Finally one girl read aloud, "Húmity."

"That's almost right, Lynn," the teacher said approvingly. "You did a fine job! But, in order to read the word correctly, we may need to use what we have learned about the construction of words. For instance, how many syllables make up the word?"

"There are four vowel sounds, so there should be four syllables," Martin responded.

Teacher builds on whatever responses she gets.

"Good for you! Now we're on the right track," the teacher said. "Where do you think the word should be divided, Martin?"

Martin went to the board and wrote, "hu-mi-di-ty."

Lynn immediately took issue with his effort. "It could be different. Can I try?"

The teacher nodded her assent and Lynn wrote, "hu-mid-i-ty." Then Lynn read aloud, "Humídity."

"That's right. Lynn's right," Mary Jane exclaimed. "I've heard that word on television on Louis Allen's program."

How does Mary Jane know?

Martin said, "You can read 'humidity' the way I've divided it, Mary Jane. Which one's right, Mrs. Clark?"

Can you?

What does Martin need to know?

"I don't know which division is the one given in the dictionary," Mrs. Clark replied. "But is that important in this instance? What were we trying to do?"

What do you think about this?

"Read a word we didn't know," Martin admitted.

"And we *can* read it now, so let's go on. What does 'humidity' mean?" Mrs. Clark questioned.

"It has something to do with weather is all I know," Mary Jane answered.

"You're a good listener, Mary Jane. Humidity *is* very important to weather," Mrs. Clark nodded. She then asked Tommy to bring a can of water from the ledge outside a window. The morning before, the children had marked the water level and placed the can outside.

"There's not as much water here as there was yesterday," Tommy remarked.

"You've got sharp eyes, Tommy. What do you suppose happened to it?" Mrs. Clark asked.

"It probably evaporated," Regina offered.

"That's a good word, Regina. Can you explain what you mean?" the teacher asked again.

"Well, when you hang wet clothes on the line, they dry, because the water evaporates. It goes away," Regina elaborated.

"Where does the water go?" Mrs. Clark smiled.

"Does it go in the air?" Lynn asked.

"Yes, it does," Mrs. Clark answered. "And the amount of water in the air is called ________?"

"Humidity!" Lynn and Martin said together.

Try reorganizing this lesson!

Mission Unaccomplished

Jane was trying to construct a sentence using packets of flash cards. She wanted the second word in her sentence to be "house," but she was not certain which of the words in the packet beginning with "H" was the one she wanted. She asked the teacher to help her select the correct one. The teacher suggested to Jane that she go to a wall chart to see if she could find the word. Jane selected the flash card words beginning with "H" and carried them to the chart. She located "House" on the picture chart. It began with a capital letter. She successfully matched it with "house" on one of her flash cards, where it began with a small letter. She returned to her seat, but became interested in something else and failed to complete her sentence.

Why?

The Missing Link

Mrs. Keith was working with Tommy in an individual conference. He was reading a story about a trip on a train. There was a sentence that said, "The train ran on the track." When Tommy came to the word "track," he hesitated, looked at the word for a time, and said, "truck."

What clue did Tommy fail to use?

Later in the story, Tommy came to a sentence that stated, "The train slowed down and then it stopped." When Tommy came to the word "stopped," he waited a long time before he said, "---started."

"Let's stop and play a game," said Mrs. Keith. "We can tell a story together. I'll read parts of a story to you, but I'm going to leave out a few of the words. When I stop, you say a word that you think will make the best sense in this story. Listen carefully."

Why is it wise to begin at the oral level?

"One morning I was eating my ________."

"Dinner," said Tommy.

"Did you think about what I said?" asked Mrs. Keith.

"Yes," replied Tommy.

"What did I say?" questioned Mrs. Keith.

"You said something about eating," answered Tommy.

"Did I say *when* I was eating?" asked Mrs. Keith.

"I don't remember," Tommy said.

"I'll read it again," said Mrs. Keith.

"One morning I was eating my ________."

"Oh, my *breakfast*," said Tommy.

"I heard a sound at the back ______."

"Door," responded Tommy.

"I had to listen carefully because the sound was very ________."

"Soft," answered Tommy.

"I opened the kitchen _______."

"Door," replied Tommy.

"I looked _________."

"Inside," responded Tommy.

"Inside?" questioned Mrs. Keith. "Where was I when I looked inside?"

"At the door," said Tommy.

"Which door?" said Mrs. Keith.

"The back door," said Tommy.

"Then where do you think I looked?"

"Oh, not inside -- *outside*," answered Tommy.

"Something said 'meow, meow' and looked up at _______."

"Me," continued Tommy.

"It was a fluffy, white _______."

"Kitten. It was a kitten!" said Tommy.

* * *

In the days that followed, Mrs. Keith used many of these oral paragraphs with Tommy. When she observed that he was able to choose meaningful words to complete the sentence, Mrs. Keith prepared some materials for Tommy to work on at the next level. Mrs. Keith wanted to use Tommy's previously developed ability to use phonetic attack to supplement his newly acquired skill of using contextual clues to arrive at the meaning of new words. She prepared several new paragraphs to read orally to Tommy. As she read these paragraphs, she aided him in becoming more exacting in his answers by putting on the board the initial letter or letters of the missing words in the sentences. The following is an example of one of these paragraphs:

Last Sunday the weather was very h___. My father said, "Let's put on our suits and go for a sw___." The family got in the car and drove to the b_____. I went swimming in the o______. My sister made a castle in the s_____. My mother had packed a l______ in a basket. We ate our lunch under the shade of a big t_____. After lunch we played catch with our new beach b_____. We stayed until it began to get d_____. Then we got into our car and drove h______.

What is the next step for Tommy?

Things To Think About - Unit VII

1. Children sometimes pick up scattered clues from the teacher and use them to "stretch" on. How many children can you think of who have burst forth with new observations and conclusions because of such a moment?

2. What is it about the clue given by the teacher which makes it profitable or possible for a child to follow it?

3. How does the teacher avoid attempting to do the child's learning for him?

References

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THE CHILD

Learns To Select Materials and Activities

The child comes to school having achieved some understandings concerning his world through observation, imitation, and self-initiated exploration and discovery. Natural curiosity prompts him to manipulate whatever comes into his sphere of interest. Through his investigations, he builds up a fund of meaningful ideas.

He becomes increasingly selective and begins to choose activities in which he can excel -- those that offer stimulation and challenge, those which fulfill a predetermined purpose.

The teacher observes individual performances and learning patterns. In this way, she is guided to select materials best suited to the needs and interests of the boys and girls.

As a child identifies purposes and desires to achieve ends important to him, he will pursue his learning with a purposeful selection of materials. Thus, the provision of a wide range of easily accessible materials offers each child the opportunity to follow his own interests at his own level of performance.

Matching With Meaning

Sam was engrossed in trying to balance a block on top of a stack of blocks almost as tall as he. He gingerly placed the last block in position, held his breath, then gave a sigh of relief as the tower remained firm.

He looked around to see if anyone was admiring his handiwork, but all the other kindergarten children were absorbed in their own activities.

His attention was caught by a brightly-colored line of pictures showing various land forms. He had helped choose the general topic of the pictures and had painted one of them himself. He walked over and picked up a card that had mountain printed on it. He found the same word used as a label on the painting of a mountain. He held his card beneath the label and said softly, "Mountain."

He matched four other cards and labels. Iceberg - hill - ocean - island. He stopped with the fifth card and looked at the picture closely. He had matched the card and label for land, but the picture (a long thin strip of green beneath a band of blue) conveyed no

What learnings take place as a child matches visual symbols?

meaning to him.

His eyes searched the pictures for clues. Suddenly he held his *land* card beneath the label *island*. He appeared to be comparing the two words. He picked up the *island* card and compared it with the *land* card.

Suddenly he smiled, put the *island* card down, and matching the *land* card to the appropriate label he said, "Land."

The bell sounded and he hurried away to pick up his blocks.

He was unaware that his teacher had been watching him - or that he had provided her with a deep sense of satisfaction.

The child experienced:

The freedom of self selection

The satisfaction of solving problems on his own

The teacher thought:

Sam possesses a high interest in our classroom activities. He has the attention span to see some of our more difficult tasks through to their completion. He is gaining in the ability to identify visual symbols.

Perhaps he would enjoy having someone record his ideas so that he can work with larger units of written thought.

Picking Pockets

Mrs. Sinclair had devised a new kind of chart game as an independent free-choice language activity.

The chart had nine pockets - three in each of three rows. A stack of picture cards was provided. The object of the game was to determine a classification common to the three pictures which appeared in a single row. If the child placed his cards in the pockets at random, his task then was to discover a common element. If he decided on a category as determined by the first card he selected, he had to go through the cards and choose those which fitted the same category.

What is the value of this activity? What differences do you see in these two approaches to this game?

Slips of writing paper were provided so that the child could make a record of his findings.

After explaining the game to Doris and Patsy, Mrs. Sinclair returned to her desk.

Patsy filled the pockets by the random method. (The pictures are indicated by words in this chart.)

(chair)	(dog)	(table)
(window)	(rose)	(daisy)
(daffodil)	(door)	(chimney)

Patsy stood before the chart deep in thought for several minutes. She turned to Doris and raised a questioning eyebrow. Doris shrugged her shoulders.

Patsy returned to the chart and suddenly switched "rose" and "daisy." "Now the second row down all has the same beginning sound - dog, daisy, door."

Doris switched "window" and "daffodil." "The second row across are 'flowers.' That'd be easier to write," she recommended.

Patsy agreed. Then she noticed that "window," "door," and "chimney" now occupied the same row. She pointed this out to Doris. They were so pleased with the results of their juggling that they asked Mrs. Sinclair to look at what they had accomplished.

"See, we just put the cards in as they came, and then we switched two and then we had a row with 'd's' and a 'flower row' and a 'parts of-a-house row'!"

"You have done a very good job of thinking," Mrs. Sinclair approved. "I'm wondering if you can find another way in which 'window,' 'door,' and 'chimney' are alike?"

Children offer a clue to the teacher who responds with a clue for them.

It was time for lunch so the girls had no opportunity to discuss Mrs. Sinclair's question until later in the day.

They returned to the chart at the first opportunity but could not resolve their problem, so they asked Howard to help them.

Howard was unable to answer their question, but he did say something that made Doris start thinking in the right direction. He said, "A door is something you go through." When Patsy and Doris excitedly presented their answer to Mrs. Sinclair, they gave Howard credit for helping them.

"He said, 'You go through a door,'" Doris reported, "and I thought - 'you can go through a window too' and then I thought 'and Santa Claus comes down through the chimney' and then I thought - 'a door and a window and a chimney are all openings!'"

Later in the week, Doris was working with the chart. When "child" and "elephant" appeared in the same row, she classified them as "mammals." However, when the next card to turn up was "butterfly," she had to find a new category. She finally decided on "living things."

A flexible mind is a thinking mind.

Mrs. Sinclair had noticed that Kenny had watched Doris, Patsy, and others at the chart from a distance, often completely forgetting his own work in his absorption with what they were doing. The teacher found this particularly interesting because Kenny was a boy who, in class discussions, had evidenced difficulty making generalizations.

When Doris left the chart, Kenny looked about and, thinking himself unobserved, walked quietly over to the chart and picked up the stack of cards. He went through them twice, carefully looking at each picture in turn. The third time through, he selected the picture of a cat and carefully placed it in the left hand pocket of the first row. The fourth time, he selected the picture of a dog and placed it in the middle of that row. Finally, he placed the picture of a mouse in the remaining pocket of the row.

"There!" he said to himself triumphantly. "A cat and a dog and a mouse are all animals."

What did Mrs. Sinclair find out about her children and their levels of generalization?

A Horse of Another Color

"I know what I'm gonna do today," announced Freddie as he hurried into Miss Evans's classroom. He was the first child to reach the pegboard on which each child recorded his plan of activities for the language arts period. He placed cards upon which were printed the names of each of his selections on a hook after his name on the board. "Puppets, first; reading, second; writing, third;" he said quietly to himself.

What might this order of activities indicate about Freddie?

"Hey, Bill," he said, turning to a child who was now standing next to him. "Want to help me? I'm going to make a puppet show about Angelo."

Bill agreed, and at the beginning of the language arts period they went to the art table. They selected crayons, large sheets of manila paper, and puppet sticks and began to work.

"I'll make Angelo," said Freddie. "You make the soldier."

When Angelo and the soldier were colored, cut out and each taped to a puppet stick, Freddie gave the next direction. "I'm going to make the horse. You make Angelo's sister."

"A horse? There's no horse in this story," said Bill.

"Yes, there is," replied Freddie. "If there isn't a horse, how did they get to town?"

"I don't think it said," answered Bill.

"Yes, it did. It said the soldier took Angelo to town on his white horse."

Bill remained silent, looking somewhat puzzled.

"I'll prove it to you," said Freddie. "Come on -- we'll get Miss Evans to play the tape."

Freddie got up and walked over to where Miss Evans was reading with Jenny. Bill followed. The two boys waited until Miss Evans looked up to acknowledge them.

"Miss Evans," whispered Freddie. "Will you let us listen to the story of *Angelo*? We've got to hear something." Miss Evans went quickly to the tape recorder and reversed the tape that was on the machine.

How natural is it that these children did not ask their teacher to settle the question for them?

The boys put on ear phones and settled down to listen to the story.

"Here it comes," whispered Freddie. "There! See! I told you! They rode on a horse."

"I know," said Bill, "but *you* said a *white* horse and it was really *black*."

Things To Think About - Unit VIII

1. What part of the learning in a classroom can come from the children's pursuit of materials and activities available for their independent selection and use?

2. How does a teacher change her ways of working with a child as he assumes greater responsibility for his own learning?

References

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THE CHILD

Helps and Is Helped by Other Children

A child seeks approval and direction from his peers. He yearns to "be like the others." Thus, a child is constantly striving to emulate what is accepted or expected by the group of children with whom he feels the closest identification. This drive for acceptance exerts extreme power in the child's acquisition, from his peers, of skills -- both physical and academic.

Communication through language is one of the highest attributes of man. This power is developed only through opportunities to practice communication skills of listening and speaking. The silent classroom precludes this method of growth. Communication that is predominately pupil-with-teacher creates a situation devoid of children's natural need and use of peer interaction.

Increased ability to communicate is acquired most easily when the child has many opportunities to interact with other children.

A classroom atmosphere should be such that a child can continuously enrich his powers in thinking through increasing his skill in language.

A child who achieves skills and understandings with ease finds that being a "helper" to others is not only a satisfying and rewarding role but also one in which he continuously refines his thinking and clarifies meanings. He receives attention and a level of persistence from his young learner that is not always achieved by the teacher.

The world of children is unique and precious -- they identify, accept, and aid each other with directness and honesty.

Don't Take My Sunshine Away

Jack attempted to keep up with the other children, but he was always two or three beats behind. The children sang --

"Let the merry sunshine in" --
(slap legs, clap hands, snap fingers)
"Let the merry sunshine in" --
(repeat action)

As the children continued the song and then repeated the refrain for the last time, Jack's brows drew together, his jaw clenched; his eyes stared, as he tried to match his motions with those of the other children.

When the children separated into their social studies interest groups, the teacher noticed Jack in a corner by himself quietly practicing the "slap, clap, snap" sequence.

When Jack's group chairman complained that Jack was not working, the teacher whispered, "Do you think you can get along without him for a little while? Jack's working so hard on his own problem it would be a shame to disturb him."

Individual purpose vs. group purpose?

Jack however, had noticed the chairman approach the teacher and had joined his committee.

He got his materials ready to help Steven paint the sky in their mural, but after one or two strokes with the brush, he again began to practice "slap, clap, snap."

Steven watched him for a few seconds and then suggested, "Why don't you go slower? Maybe you could do it if you went slower -- like this." He dropped his brush in the paint pot and illustrated.

Jack adjusted his speed and after several unsuccessful attempts managed to coordinate his movements with those of Steven.

This interaction may prove to be a permanent bridge to further learning for Jack. Why?

The committee chairman joined the boys and soon the other four members of the group were drawn into the rhythm. They all began singing softly while gradually stepping up the speed.

"Miss Atkins, the mural committee isn't doing their work," complained a member of the play committee.

"They're working on something far more important than a mural," Miss Atkins smiled. "They're helping a friend with a problem."

Jack experienced:

An opportunity to continue working on a problem of immediate concern

The other children experienced:

The satisfaction of helping another child solve a problem

The teacher decided:

Jack was disturbed by his inability to master the singing game. His anxiety was so great that he could give no thought to the ensuing task.

I am glad that he displayed his need for success in this activity. Steven is developing a splendid sensitivity to peer relationship. Each is helped by the other.

My planning should always be flexible so that I can respond to a child's problem at the teachable moment.

What's In A Name?

The hot afternoon sun streamed through the partially-closed Venetian blinds into a busy classroom.

Mike searched unsuccessfully through his cluttered desk for several minutes. Turning, he caught sight of what he was looking for. He made a grab at a paper in Mark's hand. Mark jerked his hand back and held the paper over his head.

"It is mine! I know it's mine!" Mike said angrily.

"No, it ain't," Mark protested. "See, that?" He pointed to a drawing on the paper. "That's the way I make a tree."

"Let me see." Mike looked at the paper intently, then snatched it away without any warning. "I told you it's mine," he triumphantly stated. "That's the way I make my tree."

Mark turned to the teacher for help. "Mike took my paper, Miss Adams. He says it's his and it ain't!"

Miss Adams quietly asked, "Why do you think it's yours, Mike?"

Teacher's question causes child to seek ways to verify beliefs.

Mike explained he recognized his own drawing.

"But, Miss Adams, it looks like _my_ tree!" Mark exclaimed.

"Well, what are you two boys going to do to solve your problem?" Miss Adams asked. "I know you can think of some way to satisfy yourselves as to whose paper it really is."

What factors might a teacher consider in encouraging children to solve their own social problems?

The boys bent over the paper and examined it together.

"I still think it's mine," Mike angrily muttered.

Mark didn't say anything. Suddenly he picked the paper up and turned it over.

"There, it is," he said. "There's my name. I'm sure glad I remembered to put it on."

"That's my name!" Mike shouted. "Don't you even know your own name?"

Mark looked puzzled. He looked at the name again. He turned his paper up and down, trying to find his own name in the letters. Finally he shrugged and said, "It ain't mine. It starts the same way -- and it's got a tall letter like mine, but it ain't my name."

"No, it isn't," Mike agreed, and running his finger under the name he read, "M-I-K-E, Mike!"

"Do you read your name from this side to this side?" asked Mark pointing from left to right.

"Don't you read yours that way?" Mike asked in a surprised voice.

"Yes. But I didn't know everybody did. Does everybody?" Mark responded.

"My gosh -- sure!" Mike told him impatiently. "Every word goes that way."

Later that day Miss Adams noticed Mark reading the word charts. He ran his finger from left to right under each word as he read it aloud.

Child-to-child interaction oftentimes stimulates self-motivated learning.

The Helping Hand

After several day's perusal of many illustrated books, the class had chosen the Laplanders for study.

In subsequent planning sessions, the children divided into four interest groups -- clothing, shelter, plants, and animals.

When the "animal group" had identified their problem and had listed questions they felt were pertinent to their study, they began their research.

Mary and Eddie each gathered an armload of books and settled themselves in a corner of the classroom library. They slowly leafed through the pages, discarded some books, and carefully placed markers in others when they found what they thought was an appropriate animal picture. There was much whispered discussion as Eddie turned repeatedly to Mary for help.

What values are inherent in this situation for both children?

The following day they collected their marked books, pencils, and writing paper and began to record their findings.

"What am I supposed to do first?" Eddie asked.

"Write down the page number," Mary instructed. "See! The picture's on page sixteen!"

"I don't know how to make sixteen," Eddie objected.

"Look at it." Mary pointed to the numeral at the bottom of the page. "See! It's a one and a six -- one ten and six ones. That's sixteen!"

There was quiet as Eddie drew a large numeral one on his paper.

"I can't make sixes so good," he complained again.

Mary transferred her pencil to her left hand, the hand closest to Eddie, and made a rather scraggly "six" next to Eddie's "one."

"I can't make a good numeral with my left hand," she said returning to her own neat paper, "but you get the idea. Make a better one over the top of mine."

Eddie laboriously made a "six" and then turned to watch Mary. After several moments' observation he asked, "Am I s'posed to write words too?"

"Write down the title of the book," Mary replied without stopping.

Eddie looked at his closed book. He picked it up and turned to his picture again. He looked at the words printed on the page opposite the picture. Then he closed the book, looked at Mary's paper; and pointing to the author's name on the cover he asked, "Is this word the 'tidal'?"

Mary glanced at the word Eddie had picked out. "I can't read that word," she said. "But I don't think it's the title, anyway." She pointed to the words in heavy print across the top of the cover. "The-----something-----Reindeer," she read aloud. "That's the title, I'll bet, because there's so many pictures of reindeer in the book. You'll have to ask Mrs. Smith to help you with the middle word."

Eddie studied the words Mary had pointed out. "Which word is reindeer?" he asked.

Mary was again busily engaged in her own work. "R-e-i-n-d-e-e-r," she spelled without looking up.

Eddie looked startled. "Can you spell 'reindeer'?" he asked in awe.

"Sure," Mary answered. "I love to spell. It's my best thing to do!"

Eddie looked thoughtful. "Do you think I could spell 'reindeer' if I try?"

What makes a child want to try?

"Sure," Mary assured him. "But why don't you learn a shorter word first. Here--." She wrote on a corner of his paper. "That's 'deer.' Learn that first."

Eddie traced with one finger the letters Mary had written as he spelled aloud, "d-e-e-r, d-e-e-r -----." He shut his eyes, and tapping with both index fingers, he intoned, "d-e-e-r, d-e-e-r -----. I can spell deer d-e-e-r, d-e-e-r---. I can spell ------."

Confidence!

Things To Think About - Unit IX

1. As the teacher observes children working and playing together, what kind of clues might be picked up that would provide guidelines for instruction?

2. What factors does a teacher need to consider in planning for successful team-learning activities?

3. How do you organize to provide for team-learning? What advantages do team-learning activities present for the teacher? What are the advantages in this kind of organization of activities?

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See: "The Effects of a Competitive Climate." pp. 143-147.

THE CHILD

Thinks for Himself

Helping a child to make use of his thinking powers aids him in moving toward the fullest development of his potential ability. This is the birthright of every child and the moral obligation of those adults with whom he has constant contact.

The child who thinks aloud with adult guidance gradually acquires techniques by which he can later approach and solve self-identified problems. As thought processes develop, the need for verbalization to reach conclusions becomes less. With increased independence in thinking, the child's ideas become more internalized. This internalization of thought effects behavior and colors perceptions and leads to the evolvement of reasonable conclusions.

Thinking involves a series of choices and a discarding of ideas as one makes value judgments.

The teacher who strives to help the child become an effective thinker must be skillful in the types of questions he poses and allow enough time so that the answers called forth are his best efforts. Children vary in the time they need to deliberate. A slow-geared mind is not necessarily intellectually inadequate. The child who is unable to respond quickly should be given thought questions sufficiently in advance so that he can develop insight into the thinking process at his own rate.

A good teacher uses every opportunity to have a child think through a problem, encouraging him to estimate and make approximations based on his current understandings. The child should become aware that conclusions and decisions are not irrevocable and need to be substantiated while still others will be subject to alteration as circumstances change.

In today's world there is faulty thinking in much of what is written; and the reader must ponder, weigh, compare, and seek logical conclusions as he employs his right to think for himself.

3

Nothing Less Than Great

"Oh, I see!" Tommy exclaimed. "When things are the same -- that's equality. And when they're not the same -- then you have inequality!"

What learnings have occurred to make a word one's own?

The other eight children that Tommy was working with in arithmetic nodded in agreement.

"Give me an example of equality, Marion," Mrs. King asked.

"Three and three is the same as six," responded Marion.

"Would you record that on the board for us?" asked Mrs. King.

Marion recorded $3 + 3 = 6$

"Very good! Now, we need to record an example of inequality. Who can remember the symbol we learned yesterday and use it to show us that things are not equal?" Mrs. King asked.

Diana hesitantly raised her hand. She wrote slowly on the blackboard, $6 > 3$

"She's right! Diana's right!" Tommy agreed. "Six is greater than three. They're not equal because six is more -- it's twice as big."

Mrs. King laughed. "That's good thinking, Tommy. Put your hand under the part which says 'greater than,' Diana."

Diana placed her hand under the correct symbol. Than Mrs. King had each member of the group write an example on the board.

Shelly wrote $3 > 2$

Paul wrote $6 > 4$

Marion wrote $10 > 9$

The group read each notation aloud.

Tommy was the last one to raise his hand. During the recording and reading time, he had been quiet and seemed lost in his thoughts.

Before he started to write, he hesitated a few moments and then swiftly wrote $5 < 6$

"Tommy, you got the mark backwards," Paul said at once. "Turn it around."

"No, it would still be wrong," Marion objected. "Five is not greater than six."

"No," Tommy said slowly, "five is smaller than six. I turned it around." he said haltingly. He looked anxiously at his teacher.

Mrs. King smiled in encouragement. "Go on, Tommy, you're doing fine!"

Clarification of thinking through verbalization

"Well, in 'greater thans' the arrow points to the smallest numeral, so I figured that if I turned the arrow around, you'd read the smallest numeral first and then it would read, 'Five is not as much as six,' and it would still be inequality, but it wouldn't be a 'greater than' it would be a--- would be a--."

"A '*less* than'! Five would be *less* than six," Diana exclaimed.

"Yeah!" Tommy sighed in relief. "It would be a 'less than.' 'Greater thans' and 'less thans' are both inequality. Did I figure it right, Mrs. King?"

Mrs. King answered in a happy voice, "You figured it right, Tommy. You certainly figured it right."

What was the most important thing that Tommy got from this experience?

Tommy experienced:

1. A free exchange of ideas which stimulated him to think creatively
2. An opportunity to extend knowledge and broaden concepts based on internalized learnings

The teacher thought:

I must provide Tommy with experiences which will cause him to reach out towards goals that will challenge him.

Even so, I must not neglect those areas of his development which will profit from working with children of lesser academic ability.

Snap Solution

Tammy, Mary, and Linda were independently playing "Categories" while their classmates engaged in other activities. Tammy, who was blindfolded, was reaching into a shoe-box, selecting one item, feeling it, and categorizing it. The categories she had chosen were hard, soft, and flexible.

Mary and Linda were receiving the items and placing them into piles according to the category selected by Tammy. The activity was proceeding rapidly with items easily falling into one of the three categories until Tammy selected the last item, a small wooden stick with cotton tips. She tested the stick for flexibility, but tested too hard. The stick snapped. She responded, with only slight hesitation, "Breakable."

Children's responses often reveal unexpected strengths.

Seek and Ye Shall Find

Each child was busy working on individual arithmetic problems designed to challenge his thinking and meet his needs.

Individual assignments aid in grouping for instructional purposes.

Jeff was slowly cutting and pasting as he matched the numerical symbols from one through ten with the correct word for each number. He was interrupted by Tommy, who needed his help.

"How do you write 'twelve'?" asked Tommy in an agitated whisper.

Jeff promptly made the "12" on a scrap of paper.

"No, not that -- I know that!" Tommy said impatiently. "I need to write the word."

Jeff said, "I don't know how to write 'twelve'." He looked at the words on his work sheet. "It's not here." He brought a book out of his desk and turned to a page that gave a pictorial representation, the numerical symbol, and the word for each number. But again he discovered that the information only went as far as ten. He looked at the "12" he had written on the scrap of paper and then back to his book. Suddenly he wrote, "ONETWO" beside the "12." He looked at what he had done and then said in a puzzled voice, "But one and two make three - ?"

What prior experiences cause children to seek information on their own?

He turned to Tommy and suggested, "You'd better ask the teacher. I'm not s'posed to know that yet."

How would you interpret this comment?

Tender Loving Care

Miss Hoover climbed down from the step ladder and asked her class, "If I had fallen when I was climbing to hang your kites up high on the wall, what would you have done to help me?"

The answers came fast and furiously.

"I would get someone from the health room."

"I would go next door and get Mr. Scott."

"I would get Mrs. Kain." (the principal) Well?

"I would get the patrols."

"I would call a doctor."

"I would call a hospital."

"If I was big enough, I'd drive you home."

"Don't worry, Miss Hoover. We would take care of you."

"The whole class would help you get up. We wouldn't all get around you and shut off the air and step on you."

A Lucky Break!

Mrs. Gilette was playing a game with basic sight vocabulary cards with a group of children.

When Mary Jane read "saw" as "was," Mrs. Gilette stopped the game, pulled the card bearing "was" from the pack and placed "saw" and "was" side by side on the chalk rail.

"Sue, can you see anything the same in these two words?" she asked.

Clarification or confusion?

"They both have the same letters," replied Sue.

"Can you see anything different in these two words?" Mrs. Gilette questioned Mary Jane.

Mary Jane shook her head.

"They have different beginning letters," interposed Marvin.

"Can you point to the beginning letter of 'saw,' Mary Jane?" asked Mrs. Gilette.

Mary Jane walked slowly to the chalk rail. She hesitated before she finally indicated the "s" in "saw."

For the next week Mrs. Gilette paid close attention to the way in which Mary Jane attacked a new word. She noticed the intense concentration when such a task was first presented and the expression of relief when Mary Jane read correctly. Mrs. Gilette was puzzled. What was causing Mary Jane to be so anxious?

Mary Jane appeared the following Monday morning proudly displaying a cast on her left arm. She had fallen from a tree. She had quite a lengthy story to tell her classmates.

During the weeks that followed, Mrs. Gilette noticed a considerable change in Mary Jane's word attack skills. There were no longer any signs of anxiety. She volunteered to read new words with a high degree of confidence.

"Boy! I sure was lucky to break my arm," she said one day to Mrs. Gilette. "I never knew which was the right side to start reading a word on. Since I broke my arm, I know to start on the broken side."

How could this incident help the teacher gain a deeper insight into her teaching practices?

Things To Think About - Unit X

1. A child who rarely participates orally can often lead his class to the solution of a problem if we give him the opportunity to delve into it. When the "quiet child" in your class enters into a discussion, haven't the results often been enlightening?

2. Let's give a child time for thinking so that his answers can give evidence of his true quality of thought. What experience do you remember in which results would have been different if you had had more time to think?

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Veatch, Jeanette. *Reading in the Elementary School*. New York: The Ronald Press Co., 1966.
See: "Critical Reading." pp. 322-323.

His Not to Reason Why

An upper grade teacher had invited a reading specialist to watch her conduct a reading lesson for three boys who were making little progress. "I don't know what to do. They don't listen and they won't try. I want you to watch them and then suggest a method that would help me teach them better."

The three boys were handed a Dick and Jane primer. The boys had progressed to the third story. They opened their books, and the teacher directed them to look at the pictures of three very young children playing with a small kitten. "We have discussed these pictures several times," the teacher told the specialist, "so today we'll just take a quick look and get right down to business."

"Do I read first this time?" Carl asked.

"No, you don't," Vincent cut in. "Henry's gotta read first. He never's read first and this time he's gotta."

"You can read first, Carl," Henry grinned, sliding his eyes toward the observer. "I don't mind, if you read first. I don't even mind bein' last."

"Now, Henry," the teacher interjected, "you know you promised to go first. You shouldn't go back on your word. Put your marker on the first line and begin."

Henry sat stubbornly silent, with his head down and the book clasped between his knees.

After an embarrassing silence, the teacher shrugged her shoulders. "Vincent, you're a good sport. Suppose you show Henry how silly he is. Don't worry if you can't read every word. We're all learning together. Carl and I will help you."

Vincent cleared his throat and, in a voice devoid of expression, hesitantly read the first paragraph. Carl, in turn, read the next paragraph.

"Now, Henry, no more silliness. Read the next paragraph," the teacher directed.

"Do you know where we are? Or have you lost your place again?"

Henry had not lost his place. Giving the visitor an apprehensive look, he started to read: "Kit-ty-ran-to-Ann-Ann-said-see-the-see-the--"

"Look at the sound chart, Henry. Find the word that begins like 'duck.' Oh, dear! I told you the word! Never mind. Go on, Henry," the teacher said.

"--see-the-see-the--" Henry stumbled.

"Duck!" the teacher supplied. "I told you once. You should listen, Henry. Half your trouble - the reason you can't read - is because you never listen."

"duck-Kit-ty-Kit-ty-jumped-at-the-at-the-at-the--" Henry was stuck again.

The teacher looked at the specialist. The look said more plainly than words, "See what I have to teach? Is it any wonder I can't get my real work accomplished? This child is hopeless!"

"Look at the picture, Henry. What do you see in the picture?" she asked.

"Some kids, a little cat, and a toy," Henry mumbled.

"What kind of a toy?" the teacher asked.

"A chicken?" Henry looked at the visitor and flashed a broad smile.

"A chicken! Henry, you know better than that! You said that to be funny. But we're not amused at your antics and I'm sure our visitor wonders how a big boy like you can behave in such a silly fashion," the teacher said in a restrained voice. She turned to Vincent. "Suppose you finish the paragraph. Show Henry how he should read."

Vincent finished the paragraph.

"Why is 'm-e-w' mew?" Henry asked suddenly. "Seems like it should be 'm-u.'"

"We can't go into that now, Henry. Let's not make things more confused. If you wouldn't think so much about how you would like things to be, but would pay attention to things as they are, you'd get ahead much faster."

When Carl had trouble with "pet" in the next paragraph, he was referred to the sound chart. Although the teacher was directing him to look at the chart, he kept his eyes glued to her lips. Unconsciously the teacher's lips pursed for the beginning sound of the unknown word. Henry was specifically instructed to note how the use of the chart had helped Carl.

However, the beginning sound was all that Carl could identify, and the teacher finally told him the word was "pet."

Now it was Henry's turn to read again.

"Don't point with your finger, Henry. Use your marker," the teacher instructed. "I want you to learn to read smoothly--not stopping after each word like you do now. I have a reason for having you do things my way. Someday you'll understand why I must insist you follow directions."

Henry stooped to the floor to retrieve the marker he had dropped. He began again: "---'get-her-for-me-it-is-fun-to-play-to-play' - wait a minute!" He whipped a piece of paper out of his pocket and scanned the hand-written lines. "With!" he exclaimed triumphantly. "It is fun to play with Kitty!"

The specialist asked curiously, "What's written on your paper, Henry?"

"Oh, that's the speech he's going to make to his class," the teacher interjected. "He's been nominated for class president. I wrote down his words. Of course I had to help him and correct the grammer, you understand--but, that's what he decided he would say."

"May I see your speech, Henry?" the specialist asked. She looked at the paper. "Can you read this?" she added in a surprised voice.

"Yes, Ma'am, most of it," Henry answered eagerly.

"He should be able to say it by heart," the teacher interrupted. "But he has to have the paper in front of him for some reason. He can't seem to remember unless he looks at the words on that paper."

"Is it all right if Henry reads it for me?" the specialist asked the teacher.

"I'm sure he would like that," the teacher replied. "Henry loves an audience."

Henry read: "My name is Henry Castle. I want to thank the people who nominated me for president of this class. I will work very hard to be a good president. If I am elected, I will work with a will. I will try to be the best president. Vote for the best--Henry Castle!"

"Put your paper away now, Henry," the teacher said. "Let's get back to reading."

All's Well That Ends Well

Valentine's Day was only a week away. The children were involved in a variety of language activities centered around their interest in giving and receiving Valentines. They had made and decorated individual bag-type "mailboxes" which were arranged on the bulletin board. Some time was set aside each day for making, addressing, and mailing Valentines. In the beginning, the children had copied ideas from commercial Valentines; but as Mrs. Cochrane circulated around the room, she encouraged first one and then another to express ideas which would have special significance for the receiver. Some of Carol's Valentines read: "You have pretty hair!" "I like your red dress!" "Your mother makes good cookies!" "You are a good speller!" Fred had written: "You don't push in line." "You run good." "I like to sit by you." And to Mrs. Cochrane herself, "You are a pretty good teacher."

The children addressed their cards using a class list Mrs. Cochrane had prepared for them in the correct manuscript form. The children had discussed the importance of legible handwriting when addressing mail and so took special care to copy as accurately as possible.

Mrs. Cochrane also used this class list to build other language skills. One group worked on identifying the beginning sounds of each name and made lists of names that began alike. Another group had alphabetized the names - first by last names and then by first names. (They were astonished to find one child's name was exactly in the middle of both lists!)

A selected group was assigned a listening lesson. Mrs. Cochrane read each child's name, and they were instructed to draw a line through any letter they could not hear. (This lesson was taped and played for the children on a listening station.)

The entire class participated in a lesson on syllables. Mrs. Cochrane clapped a pattern, Clap - Pause - Clap, for example; and if a child's name fit the pattern, he stood, and, saying his name in rhythm, joined in the clapping. Mrs. Cochrane introduced different patterns each day, and a chart was kept showing the various patterns accompanied by the appropriate children's names.

The children discovered that even though some names contained the same number of beats, the rhythm patterns would vary because of different accented beats.

Two of the girls became quite skillfull in clapping their classmates' names, and Mrs. Cochrane suggested that they make up some nonsense names and establish a pattern for each. The girls used their knowledge of phonics as a base for spelling and pronunciation.

When one of the girls discovered that every clap contained a vowel (sound), Mrs. Cochrane allowed her to share this information with the class. The girls made ditto copies of their nonsense words and distributed them to several other classes.

Valentine's Day morning was spent in preparing for an afternoon party.

A committee of girls measured various juices: three cups of apple, one cup of orange, one-half cup of cranberry, and one-half cup of lemon to each quart container.

Another group measured and stirred the water into gingerbread mix which the cafeteria manager then baked for them. She explained how to set the temperature control and helped the committee determine at what time the gingerbread would be finished. This committee also had to calculate into how many pieces each of the three gingerbreads needed to be cut so that everyone would get the same size piece and nothing would be left over. They drew diagrams on the board and worked a long time before they decided to cut each gingerbread into nine pieces. (They had one piece too many. After a heated discussion and a vote, the extra piece was sent to the principal!)

Another group measured and cut placemats from a long roll of shiny shelf paper. Then they pushed all the desks together to form one long table and set each desk with a mat, a cup, a napkin, and a plastic fork. The children's mailboxes were removed from the bulletin board and used as place markers.

Three boys constructed a game. One of their group stretched out on a big piece of wrapping paper. The other two drew his outline, and this silhouette was cut out. They fastened it to the now empty bulletin board and then did research in several books Mrs. Cochrane had provided. They were able to determine where the heart was located in the body and drew an outline of this area with a red magic marker on their paper figure.

In the meantime, several other children had cut out red paper hearts and initialed one for each member of the class. (The game to be played was a variation of "Pin the Tail On the Donkey.") The boys who had constructed the figure argued with the heart committee. "Hearts don't look like that! See?" one boy said, displaying an illustration from a reference book.

"We're not makin' real hearts, we're makin' Valentine hearts," a small girl answered calmly as she went on cutting.

The two committees finally agreed that the class would be shown a picture of a real heart before beginning the game that afternoon.

The children did not finish their tasks at the same time. As each group finished, they had a choice of quiet activities from which to choose. Some read in the library corner; some worked puzzles or played word games in a cleared corner on the floor; some examined the specimens in the science center; and others were content to sit and talk quietly with a friend. One boy who was having difficulty in controlling his excitement was sent on an errand by Mrs. Cochrane.

At last all was in readiness. Mrs. Cochrane led the children to the playground where they enjoyed a half-hour's free play.

When they returned to their room, Mrs. Cochrane told them "The Legend of St. Valentine" and played a favorite record. Then it was time for lunch.

Before beginning the afternoon's activities, Mrs. Cochrane had another discussion period to refresh the children's memories as to what they had previously planned to do. Each committee identified its duties, and a schedule of events was recorded with time allotments.

The first activity was the taping of an original Valentine's Day story. Each child drew the name of a Mother Goose character. Mrs. Cochrane began the story by saying, "Mother Goose planned to surprise all her friends. First she went to see Old King Cole. She said to him, ________."

The child who had drawn the name of that character went on with the story -- "'Would you give me some money to buy Valentines for all my friends?' But King Cole wouldn't, so Mother Goose cried and then he was sorry and gave her a big pocket-purse filled up with dollar bills. And then Mother Goose decided to buy Little Boy Blue a ________."

"A new horn," the next child responded. And so it went. Simple Simon received a cupcake, Mother Hubbard's dog some Friskies, Little Miss Muffet a spray can to kill the spider, Rock-a-'Bye-Baby a new bassinet, etc.

After each child had a turn to speak, Mrs. Cochrane concluded the story. As the allotted time was up, they decided that they would listen to the play-back the following morning and write letters inviting other classes to listen to their efforts.

After the children played "Pin the Heart on Freddie," refreshments were served and the Valentines were opened and read. There was enough time for several of the children to share their favorites with the whole group, and then it was time to go home.

Two boys and two girls remained after school; and with the help of Mrs. Cochrane and the custodian, they soon had the classroom tidy and ready for the next day's work. As they were leaving, Mrs. Cochrane overheard one boy say to the other, "Boy! We sure had a good day! No arithmetic, no spellin' or readin' or writin'! It sure was a good day!"

Appendix

Before the Children Come --

The following were compiled from suggestions offered by teachers working in various elementary schools in Montgomery County. They were asked, "What preparation do you make before the children come to school in September?"

> "I organize a notebook with separate pages for each child. I record pertinent information from the cumulative folders such as addresses, telephone numbers, parents' occupations, number of siblings, results of standardized testing, and the written comments of former teachers which might prove helpful. Also, any information from the health record that I should keep in mind. These pages also are used to record each child's progress during the year."

> "I talk to people. I like to find out from other members of the faculty what their interests are and how they feel about children and the methods and techniques they have found to be rewarding or disappointing. I also try to establish friendly relations with the supporting services staff. I like to know the people I work with."

> "I thoroughly investigate the children assigned to me who seem to have unique problems. I study confidential folders, if there are any, and confer with the principal and former teachers in an attempt to prevent putting these children into situations they are not equipped to handle."

> "I review the courses of study and then collect a suitable classroom reference library from the available textbooks. I make as wide a selection as is possible to satisfy different ranges of ability."

> "If I'm new to a school, I like to become thoroughly familiar with the library. I make an inventory of available tapes, recordings, and reference materials applicable to the content I will be teaching. I also consult the card catalogue and make a list of materials I wish to order from the County Instructional Materials Center."

> "I check on the audio-visual equipment. I find out the school's procedures for their use and learn to operate any that are not familiar to me."

> "I gather together as many books as I can for our classroom library. I make a trip to the Lincoln Center each fall and make additions to my own collection from discarded trade and text books. I augment this nucleus with school and public library selections. During the year, the children also bring in their own books."

> "I make sure I know the exact procedures for fire or Civil Defense drills."

> "I investigate the school's available science equipment."

"I make durable name cards for the children. It helps me establish rapport with each child when I can immediately call him by name. Later in the year, the cards can be used when resource teachers or substitute teachers are working with the children."

"Our faculty spends much time and effort toward organizing materials and schedules. We evaluate the last year's procedures and each year try to find more efficient ways of handling total school concerns."

"I arrange the children's desks and chairs so there will be optimal opportunity for interaction. I put up the flag and alphabet strips, and make easily accessible any materials I will be using the first few days, but I don't plan where the various learning centers will be. Organizing their classroom and deciding on routine procedures are the first problems the children seek solutions for."

"I make sure all equipment issued for use in my classroom is legibly marked with my initials and room number. This includes math manipulative devices, maps and globes, physical education equipment, recordings, rhythm instruments, games, puzzles, and art supplies which are not expendable."

"I organize the supply closet so that instructional materials will be easily accessible for the children and for me. I also make sure I have a goodly supply of housecleaning aids such as a broom, a dust pan, dust cloths, sponges, soap, and scouring powder."

"I spend a lot of thought and time on plans for my first day with the children. First impressions are so important! The activities I plan are, for the most part, ones in which the children are called upon to identify problems of room organization and to establish satisfactory procedures for work and play. If possible, my music, physical education, and literature periods are based on favorites from the year before. The children are always delighted as this tie-in with the past activities seems to offer them a feeling of learning continuity. Some new learnings are also planned so that the children will feel a sense of accomplishment as they evaluate their first day's work and plan for the second."

"First day plans are made on the basis of second-hand information gleaned from reading pupils' records and from talking with former teachers. From that day on, my days' activities are based on evaluative planning sessions with small groups and with the total class and on clues I pick up from individual children."

Developing Oral and Written Language Through the Use of Audio-Visual Instructional Materials

The selection of appropriate audio-visual instructional materials for use with particular groups of children with particular purposes for learning is one of the most significant tasks of the classroom teacher. Mechanical equipment is available for use in projecting and amplifying commercially-prepared as well as teacher-made and child-made materials.

Teachers who do not find available the equipment listed below, need to consult with their school librarian or resource teacher. Equipment and audio-visual materials can be obtained on loan from the County Instructional Materials Center. Appointments can also be made with the Instructional Materials Center for guidance in the use of equipment or for aid in the creation of materials for use in classrooms.

Motion picture projector

Have you considered:

Showing a film in order to elicit from the children its main ideas of sequence?

Showing only those parts of a film which relate to specific facts needed to enrich understandings?

Showing a film without sound in order to develop with the children an oral or written exposition or dialogue?

Showing films (such as Autumn Pastorale) whose "talk" is music in order to allow children to express the feelings the music and pictures evoke?

Filmstrip projector and filmstrip viewers

Do you know:

That a small group of children can view a filmstrip under normal room lighting conditions by using a filmstrip viewer?

That if a filmstrip viewer is not available, a large cardboard box can be made into a daylight screen by making an opening in one side and covering the opposite side with white paper? The filmstrip projector can be used to project a filmstrip into the box. The four sides of the box will provide enough darkness to give a clear image.

Have you considered:

Encouraging a child or a small group of children to use a filmstrip for independent research?

Having a teacher-taped dialogue to accompany a selected filmstrip?

Stopping at an interesting place in a filmstrip and having the children predict orally or in writing how they think the story will end?

Slide projector

Have you considered:

Using slides of a class activity so that children can write or tape an accompanying dialogue?

Opaque projector

Do you know:

That the opaque projector must be used in a darkened room?

That it is used to project printed materials as well as solid objects?

Have you considered:

Using the opaque projector to project a "movie strip" made by the children?

Encouraging children to make pictures to be projected in conjunction with their oral reports?

Projecting natural phenomena, i.e., rocks, leaves, insect collections, in order to observe them more closely?

Overhead projector

Do you know:

That the overhead projector can be used in a lighted classroom?

That reclaimed X-ray transparencies can be ordered from the supply warehouse for use in constructing teacher-made or child-made materials?

That colored illustrations cut from magazines or discarded books can be transferred onto transparencies by the color-lift process?

Have you considered:

Having a child or a group of children use projection pencils or felt marking pens to draw pictures, graphs, or diagrams for planned programs?

Using this projector in handwriting instruction?

Presenting or reviewing mathematical processes through this medium (which focuses every pupil's attention)?

Lantern slide projector

Do you know:

That illustrations too small to be satisfactorily used in classroom instruction can be cut from discarded books and magazines and transferred onto 4" by 4" transparencies?

That transparencies can be mounted in reusable Polaroid lantern slide mounts, available at photo shops?

Listening station

Do you know:

That the listening station can serve as an additional teacher? Many lessons that would normally require the teacher to be present can be taped, which results in "free" time to devote to the individual needs of children.

That in order to prepare for effective listening, children should first participate in several short introductory lessons? These lessons should be directed toward familiarizing the children with the "feel" of the earphones and the mechanics involved in using the station.

Have you considered:

Taping a favorite story in order that the children might answer specific questions in a variety of ways?

Taping a musical selection, such as "The Storm" from The Grand Canyon Suite, and encouraging the children to draw pictures of the feeling the music evokes within them?

Taping a story in which words beginning with a specific letter-sound occur frequently, and then having the children identify and record this sound in response to directions?

Tape recorder

Do you know:

That the tape recorder is an invaluable tool in helping each child to evaluate his own oral expression?

Have you considered:

Taping discussions in order to have their oral interaction?

Taping discussions in order to analyze generalizations and understandings arrived at while engaged in a specific study?

Recording a child's original story or his interpretation of a story he has heard, seen, or read?

Having a group of children make up a composite story, each taking a turn to add to the sequence of events?

Primary typewriter

Do you know:

That it is advisable to use the primary typewriter in preparing materials for use in the opaque and overhead projectors? Materials typed on standard-sized typewriters do not have the necessary degree of clarity.

Have you considered:

Using the typewriter to record dictated stories so that each child has a book of his own thoughts?

Encouraging children to use the typewriter in making labels for classroom displays?

Thermofax

Do you know:

That the Thermofax can be used in laminating as well as in reproducing materials? Pictures laminated in the Thermofax can be written on with projection pencils, and the marks can be erased without harming the pictures.

Have you considered:

Laminating special pictures so that they can be handled without fear of soil?

Making transparencies to be used in the overhead projector?

Dry Mount

Do you know:

That the dry mount press can be borrowed from the Instructional Materials Center?

That dry mounting is one of the most effective ways to adhere illustrations or original pictures to cardboard-like material?

Have you considered:

Mounting pictures or charts on fabric so they can be hung on chart racks for classroom use and later rolled up to facilitate easy storage?

Developing Word Recognition Skills*

A child's early success in reading depends on his ability to build up a stock of sight words: labels for objects and actions with which he is familiar. This stockpile provides a basis for understanding the relationship between sounds and letters and for developing an awareness of root words, inflectional endings, prefixes, and suffixes.

The first words a child is encouraged to recognize and remember, therefore, should be those for which he has a thorough oral understanding. They should be presented in context so that the image, the sound, and the meaning of a specific word are received as "one" in his mind.

As the child meets a known word in different contexts, he enlarges his understanding of the meaning of the word and, at the same time, strengthens his visual memory of the word. As the child's store of mental word images enlarges, so does his ability to recall spontaneously and compare known words with those which he has never before had an occasion to read. When the new word is a familiar part of the child's oral vocabulary, his response is usually immediate because it makes sense. He has no need to verbally identify details which differentiate that word from other printed words he knows. Many reading habits work more smoothly when a child is not required to talk about them.

The teacher may, during an individual conference, give a child the phonetic or structural clue he feels will enable the child to read an unfamiliar word immediately. But too much emphasis placed on word diagnoses at this time will cause the child to lose sight of the overall meaning of the selection and cheat him of the "fun" of reading. The teacher's primary purposes, aside from making an analysis of developing comprehension skills, are to identify word attack skills which the child is using successfully and to take note of those he feels the child needs to know next. In this way the child is encouraged to use his own initiative in decoding new words, the teacher does not waste time in teaching something the child already knows, and the teacher is able to plan future activities to introduce or strengthen needed analysis skills.

The teacher must not assume that the child who is developing capable phonetic and structural analysis skills will no longer learn words by "sight": many words do not lend themselves to word analysis; many words may be beyond his present capabilities to analyze; and many may be beyond the scope of his present conceptual vocabulary.

When a child is asked to "sound out" a word he has never heard or learned to use, he is merely exercising his eyes and vocal chords; he is not reading.

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*Adapted from Reading Skills and Behavioral Outcomes, A Tentative Scope and Sequence Chart, Grades K-12, Montgomery County, 1962.

The child who becomes a proficient interpreter of written expression is the child who automatically uses a combination of form, context, phonetic and/or structural clues to produce a fluent unlocking of the meaning of a sentence or paragraph as he blends known words with new words.

Developing early reading abilities:

- Builds concepts and word meanings by participation in many varied oral language activities
- Listens with understanding and enjoyment to stories and poems
- Supplies missing words while listening to a story
- "Reads" a series of pictures in left to right progression
- "Reads" picture books with understanding and enjoyment
- Makes a picture to illustrate a word or a sentence
- Uses effective eye-hand coordination
- Identifies similarities in sounds
- Distinguishes differences in sounds
- Identifies similarities in size, color, and shape of objects
- Distinguishes differences in size, color, and shape of objects
- Understands that a word is a sound or a series of sounds and is used as a language unit
- Reads signs and simple words
- Reads his own and his friends' names
- Dictates and reads back simple words, captions, and sentences
- Understands the relationships between oral and written language
- Identifies similarities in words, phrases, and sentence forms
- Distinguishes difference in words, phrases, and sentence forms
- Uses meaning clues furnished by pictures to identify unfamiliar words

- Understands an unfamiliar word from the sense of the whole selection
- Discriminates between variant meanings of a word by using context clues
- Uses punctuation aids to derive meaning
- Masters a sight vocabulary large enough to give a basis to generalize about sounds and their printed symbols
- Recalls letters of the alphabet in sequence
- Recalls in which part of the alphabet a letter occurs

Developing phonetic analysis:

- Associates consonant sounds with the appropriate letters
- Blends consonant sounds
- Associates short and long vowel sounds with the appropriate letters
- Blends consonant and long and short vowel sounds to form word wholes
- Begins to recognize that when a one-syllable word containing one vowel ends in a consonant, the vowel is usually short
- Begins to recognize that when two vowels are together in a one-syllable word, the first vowel is usually long and the second is silent
- Begins to recognize that the final e on a one-syllable word is silent and the vowel is usually long
- Begins to recognize that when a one-syllable word ends in a vowel, the vowel is usually long
- Uses consonant substitutions in attacking unfamiliar words
- Associates consonant digraph sounds with appropriate letter combinations, e.g., sh, th, ch, ng, wh
- Recognizes common vowel blends, e.g., oi, ow, ou, ew
- Recognizes common phonograms, e.g., ell, ick
- Develops an awareness of silent letters, e.g., know, lamb

- Develops an awareness of the effect of the r sound upon the preceding vowel
- Uses knowledge of the letters and combination of letter sounds to blend and form word wholes
- Begins to hear and identify the number of syllables in a word
- Begins to be aware of accentuation in words of more than one syllable
- Begins to recognize that a syllable contains one vowel sound
- Uses visual clues to syllabicate and identify vowel sounds in words of more than one syllable

Developing structural analysis:

- Identifies root words and inflectional endings as meaning units, e.g., walks, dog's, dishes, playing
- Understands that a suffix is a meaningful unit affixed to the end of a word which combines its meaning with that of the word to which it is affixed
- Identifies root words and suffixes as meaning units, e.g., rainy, softly, smallest
- Identifies the root in an inflected form in which the spelling of the root word changes, e.g., bigger, making, earliest
- Understands that a prefix is a meaningful unit affixed to the beginning of a word which combines its meaning with that of the word to which it is affixed
- Identifies prefixes and root words as meaning units, e.g., untie, dislike, repay
- Begins to recognize the grammatical function of suffixes as an aid to meaning, e.g., work (v.) - worker (n.), wind (n.) - windy (adj.)
- Recognizes that a compound is a word composed of root words that combine their meanings to form a new word, e.g., summertime, dollhouse, sailboat

Suggested Guidelines for Individual Reading Conferences

The primary purpose of the individual reading conference is to identify what the child knows and what he needs to know next. Together, pupil and teacher evaluate progress and make plans for further growth. Thus, the child works toward accepting responsibility for his own learning and the teacher is able to diagnose difficulties and identify needed skills.

Individual diagnoses provide the teacher with bases for grouping children with similiar needs.

There are four things a teacher should work to find out in every individual conference. They are:

I. How does the child feel about the book he has selected?

II. To what degree does the child comprehend what he has read?

III. How effective is the child's oral reading?

IV. What can I do right now to help the child gain more reading power?

The suggested questions listed under two of the categories are to be used merely as springboards toward formulating appropriate questions for each child. The teacher should endeavor to ask questions he feels would never have occurred to the child. His responses should be the clue to what the teacher feels should be asked next. While some questions will be almost the same from conference to conference, the teacher should always seek to formulate problems that will be each child's own -- and like no one else's!

I. How does the child feel about the book he has selected?

It is important that the teacher find out what attitudes have been reinforced or altered as a result of the child's current reading. He accomplishes this as the child reveals his feelings about what he has read.

As the child answers the teacher's probing questions, he is lead to discover the degree of understanding he possesses about a story. As he discusses the behavior of characters in a story, he begins to form mental pictures of the kind of people he admires and wishes to emulate.

Through talking about his feelings, the child can learn to see how he faces his problems and begin to evaluate and alter the methods he uses to seek solutions. He begins to recognize that although events may not always be to his liking, thoughtful perseverance on his part can usually effect satisfactory solutions.

The teacher might ask:	The teacher gains insight into:
1. "What made this book look interesting to you?"	What factors make a book appealing to the child
2. "Did you find this story so exciting that you found it hard to stop reading? What was it about the story that made you feel that way?"	The association between a child's prior experience and his current interest
3. "Tell me about one of the story characters and what he did."	Those characteristics which influence the child's attitude towards self and others
4. "Is there any way you would like to change the story?"	Some of the value judgments which the child holds as well as his creative ability

II. To what degree does the child comprehend what he has read?

The kind of questions that cause a child's mind to expand are those which involve the child in expressing his own feelings and thoughts. He should be stimulated to express ideas beyond the recalling of details or the guessing of what he thinks the teacher expects.

In the individual conference, the teacher seeks to find out what the child thinks in light of what he knows. When the child's answers reflect an inadequate basis for logical deduction, the teacher then raises questions to help him "fill in the gaps."

The teacher also has the opportunity to check on the child's ability to handle the mechanics of reading; phonetic analysis, structural analysis, and the like.

Most important, the child must be guided to see a purpose in working on the accumulation of an enriched vocabulary and improving his ability to deal with more complex sentence patterns.

The teacher might ask:	The teacher gains insight into:
1. "Tell me about your favorite part of the story."	The child's depth of comprehension and his ability to relate in his own words what he has read

2. "What made you decide that this was a real (or unreal) story?"	The child's ability to distinguish between reality and fantasy through analysis of content
3. "Can you read this word and tell me what it means in this sentence?"	The child's word attack skills--his ability to use context clues--his vocabulary development
4. "What do you think will happen next?"	The child's ability to recall events in sequence in order to predict outcomes
5. "What other title might be appropriate for this story?"	The child's ability to summarize in order to form a literary generalization
6. "How does this picture add to your understanding of the story?"	The child's ability to use picture clues to enrich the mood and meaning of a story

III. How effective is the child's oral reading?

An adequate sight vocabulary and sufficient eye-sweep to enable the child to "read ahead" are necessary prerequisites for the successful oral interpretation of written symbols.

The child must be helped to see that he alone is responsible for preparing to read aloud in his very best manner when he confers individually with his teacher. He should have made a thoughtful selection and practiced reading it orally with an understanding of the skills he wished to develop.

He should try to read aloud in the manner in which he normally talks. His voiced inflexion should reflect his understanding and personal involvement with the content of the story.

He should use punctuation clues to help him convey mood and meaning. There should be no doubt when the child encounters an exclamation point!

IV. What can I do right now to help the child gain more reading power?

In the early stages when a child is still very dependent in his attempts to read, an individual conference becomes an essential instructional moment.

As the child reads, the teacher has an excellent opportunity to detect the method peculiar to the child in attacking unidentified words. By capitalizing on the skill which the child is beginning to find useful, and by reinforcing this, the teacher gives him added confidence.

A teacher can give many clues to encourage new learning.

To the child who reads haltingly and is puzzled over "the next word," the teacher gives a sound clue or a rhyming clue. When he detects a lack of visual discrimination, he points out differences in words.

For the child who doesn't yet read, the teacher decides what next step he can be helped to take. Perhaps a picture clue can be matched with one word on the page as the teacher and the child discuss the ideas suggested by the pictures. Perhaps the child's hand is guided from left to right as the teacher reads to him. Or perhaps, as a line is read, the teacher pauses at the key word so that the child can respond using context clues.

And so it goes. Each conference is different from the one before as each child's strengths and weaknesses are recognized and immediately acted upon by the perceptive teacher. Follow-up activities may be suggested to reinforce this immediate instruction. Each child is helped to see what should be his own next step and is given the clues to enable him to take it.

Keeping Records of Individual Reading Conferences

Most teachers develop their own ways for keeping track of each child's progress. The items most commonly recorded are:

1. The date of the conference
2. The book used in the conference
3. Problems encountered
    a) Comprehension*
    b) Word attack skills**
4. Behaviors and/or attitudes
5. Follow-up activities (if any)
    a) Group assignments for skill development
    b) Individual assignments for skill development
    c) Child's own desire to share his story (oral reading, picture, diorama, etc.)

One of the most personal ways to keep records is that of a running log. All that is needed is a page for each child in a loose-leaf notebook. No headings are necessary as the teacher merely records what he believes to be the most important fact or facts derived from the conference. Such a log tends to take on the unique personality of the teacher and is a goldmine of information when it comes to reporting progress to parents. If the teacher allows himself freedom of expression, he will be able to recall the child's behavior and his reaction to it. He might write "made up her own ending, a happy one, for My Turtle Died Today"; or "must find a way to help him decide for himself"; or "third time 'round for Madeline -- how she loves that book!"; or "wants another book by McCloskey"; or "hooray! his first completed book -- wants to share it with the class."

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* See pp. 151-2, 156-7
** See pp. 151-4

(Sample record page)

JOHN SMITH

Date	Book	Reading for Different Purposes	Use of Meaning Clues

The beginning teacher, or the teacher who has never used the conference approach to the teaching of reading, may want to construct a check list of skills and components of the reading process. The categories in such a list should have sufficient scope to encompass the more minute reading needs the teacher records during each individual conference. It will serve no purpose to make an exhaustive list of specific skills to be checked off, one by one. First, it is too complicated to be practical; and second, there is no sequence nor series of skills applicable to every child. Learning simply doesn't happen that way.

Ability to Recognize and Analyze Words	Oral Reading to Convey Meaning and Feeling	Follow-up

Skills or Components of Reading

I. Reading for Different Purposes
  - To get general import
  - To generalize
  - To summarize
  - To evaluate critically
  - To predict outcomes

II. Use of Meaning Clues
  - Using pictures to enrich understanding
  - Grasping sequence of events
  - Recalling details
  - Relating to previous experience
  - Perceiving character relationships
  - Enlarging meanings of words
  - Interpreting figures of speech

III. Ability to Recognize or Analyze Words
  - Building a stock of sight words
  - Using configuration clues
  - Using context clues
  - Using phonics generalizations
  - Using structural analysis

IV. Oral Reading to Convey Meaning and Feeling
  - Using punctuation as a guide to interpretation
  - Using normal speech patterns and inflections
  - Adapting voice to fit characters

Suggested Activities for Development of Particular Skills in Listening*

Attentive and accurate listening occur when a child is listening to materials that are interesting to him at his level.

Ability to develop auditory perception

Identifying sounds in the room from their origin

Playing an echo game in which a word is whispered from teacher to child (or children) until one child says the word aloud; then comparing the spoken word with the original word

Listening to a voice sound and replying with a word in which that same sound occurs

Ability to develop auditory discrimination

Listening to nursery rhymes, poems, and stories to identify words which begin alike

Making up rhymes which contain words that sound alike

Listening to the teacher read a selection or a list of words to identify word beginnings as consonant sounds (b, d, t), blends (br, fr, sp), or vowel sounds (invite)

Listening to the speech of others and identifying the ending sounds (s, es, ies, ing, ful, less, ed)

Ability to follow directions

Responding to simple commands as they are given singly or in a series

Playing a game in compliance with directions that have been given orally

Following instructions in an assignment

Ability to listen for new words, phrases, and ideas

Taking turns reading with a friend and listing new words and phrases

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*Adapted from The Language Arts, A Curriculum Guide for Elementary Schools, Montgomery County Public Schools, Rockville, Maryland, 1956, pp. 19--21.

Listening to stories or poems at the listening station and checking on new words and phrases

Listening to a factual movie and relating one new thing that was learned

Ability to listen for a sequence of ideas

Listening to a story and retelling it in sequence

Detecting faulty sequence in hearing an outline of a known story

Listening to and dramatizing a story or poem using its sequence of events

Ability to recognize high and low tones, soft and loud tones, and tonal relationships

Listening to recordings of songs of musical instruments and sounds in the environment

Using rhythm instruments to produce sounds and classifying them as to loud and soft, high and low

Indicating when a particular sound or pattern of sounds is repeated in a selection

Ability to listen and summarize accurately

Taking part in conversational situations such as group discussions and interviews and stating what has been said

Listening to reports and making oral summaries of their main ideas

Appreciative listening occurs when the child settles down to enjoy a story, poem, or music. He enters into the situation imaginatively. He may or may not feel the urge to do something further to express his feelings.

Ability to imitate or reproduce

Listening to sounds in or outside the classroom, and reproducing them by using musical instruments

Listening to the teacher read or tell stories, and mimicking the sounds heard such as galloping horses, barking dogs, and running children

Listening to the recording of a song in order to learn to sing it

Ability to listen to spoken words and music to hear beauty, rhythm, and cadence

Listening to stories and poems to enjoy expressive language

Listening to a group of classmates present a choral reading selection

Listening to a musical selection, story, or poem to get a mental picture to accompany the selection

Ability to feel as the result of listening

Listening to stories and poems, and discussing feelings evoked by the characters

Acting out the parts of the characters

Responding to sounds outside the classroom (wind, rain, sirens)

Identifying how the audience feels as a result of listening to a speaker

Creative listening occurs when the child listens, appreciates, and then expresses himself in a way which is entirely his own.

Ability to listen imaginatively to the selection presented

Responding to music and poetry with bodily movements

Using art materials, such as finger paints, clay, chalk, paints, to express ideas inspired by listening

Ability to listen in order to dramatize

Dramatizing the action suggested by a paragraph

Making up a dramatized story to accompany a musical selection

Choosing music to express the mood of a story or poem

Listening to stories and poems on which to base puppet shows and dramatizations

Ability to listen to develop new or original solutions to problems

Listening to a story to see how someone else solved a problem, and using the solution in order to solve classroom problems

Listening to a part of a familiar story, and creating different endings in which the problems are solved in different ways

Analytical and critical listening occur when the listener first identifies what he hears and then weighs it against past experience. The listener is, above all, alert to truth, logic, and to the emotional and factual quality of what is said.

Ability to get specific information to answer a question or gain new information

Listening to distinguish between statements and questions

Listening to oral reports, and asking relevant questions after the speaker has finished

Answering thought questions after listening to a story

Ability to listen to understand and appraise what is heard

Listening to several selections about a single subject and contrasting and evaluating them in the light of past experience

Listening to a story, and making a personal appraisal of the characters and their motives

Choosing to read a book after hearing a classmate give an oral report on it

Activity Centers to Encourage Independent Learning

Children must be thoroughly familiar with class routines so that they can pursue their own interests, individually or in small groups, with a minimum of interruptions during individual conferences.

It is a good idea to use role-playing in developing understandings of procedures which have been jointly decided upon by teachers and pupils. Have groups of children go through the motions of choosing and changing books, reading silently, preparing for conferences, moving to new activities, getting needed help or supplies, and so on.

The children should be aware of the kinds of activities which are compatible with a reading period -- those which will not require the teacher's direct supervision and which are not distracting because they are reasonably quiet. (A busy hum of activity is certainly not undesirable.)

Each child has a comparatively long block of time for which he must plan independent, worth-while activities. It is essential that every child read a book of his own choice for part of this period. When he has "read himself out," he is then free to pursue his interests at one of the various learning centers.

In the beginning, the teacher may offer the child a selection of activities from which to choose; but as the year progresses, most children begin to think for themselves and plan and execute independent activities with only the most informal kind of supervision from the teacher.

As essential as the children's understanding of routines is the physical arrangement of the room. The teacher must start with the total area provided and decide how he will divide it so as to permit optimum access to materials and work spaces. The placement of immovable shelves, drawers, file cabinets, sinks, windows, closets, electric outlets, and doors must be taken into account as well as the space required for moveable equipment: desks, chairs, tables, easels, chart racks, and the like.

There are numerous ways to arrange a classroom to advantage, but only you, with your knowledge of your children and their requirements can arrange _your_ classroom so that it will be most suitable for the purposes you have in mind.

Keeping these factors firmly in mind, let us proceed to the consideration of possible centers of learning you may want to establish.

The Classroom Library - the "heart" of the classroom

Everything possible should be done to display and arrange the book supply in as attractive way as is possible. Books should _not_ be categorized as "easy" or "hard" but should be grouped according to content and with stimulating captions. For example, _Laugh Along With Me!_ (humor), _The World Is So Full of a Number of Things_ (science), _Long Ago and Far Away_ (historical fact and fiction), _Beyond the Blue Horizon_ (adventure), _Just Like Me!_ (children), _A-hunting We Will Go_ (reference).

The system for checking out and returning books should be made as simple and as foolproof as possible in order to facilitate a smooth flow of distribution and, at the same time, make it possible to keep a running account of each book's whereabouts.

Use your ingenuity to acquire furniture and accessories that will entice children toward books. Low tables, small rocking chairs, a rug, a cheerful lamp for gloomy days, reproductions of fine paintings, and flowers or plants will all serve to create an atmosphere conducive to exploring the wide, wonderful, warm world of books.

The Composing Center - the "inner thoughts" of the classroom

The size of this center will be dictated by the amount of classroom space available. It may be a place where only supplies are kept--sharp pencils, crisp new paper, soft erasers, and colorful picture dictionaries.

Ideally it should also include writing space for from two to eight children and should be located adjacent to a lined section of the chalkboard where children can write "big" and erase mistakes easily. There should also be enough wall space or a firm rack available so that stories can be recorded on large chart paper.

Many teachers have found the primary typewriter to be a stimulating adjunct to the composing center. Children love to hunt and peck and are marvelously patient about it. The typewriter can sometimes stimulate a reluctant child to expressing his inner thoughts.

The Listening Station - the "other teacher" in the classroom

This center should in some fashion be incorporated into every classroom.

Most educators agree that teachers have for too long overlooked the importance of listening to total language development.

If earphones are not available, use the tape-recorder set at a volume which will not distract those children not directly engaged in the listening activity.

Commercially-prepared records and tapes can be used to good advantage if the teacher makes critical selections, but the most appropriate lessons are those which the teacher devises and tapes himself and which are therefore constructed with the needs and interests of specific groups of children in mind. Unless the planned follow-through activities are completely open-ended, a teacher has no justification in using the same listening lesson for every child in the class.

Literature, mathematics, social studies, science, art, and music all provide an inexhaustible source for the development of listening with understanding.

Correctly used, the listening station frees the teacher to work directly with a child or a group of children while, at the same time, those students at the listening station are receiving needed instruction as effectively as they might if there were another teacher in the classroom.

The Art Center (or centers) - the "creative life line" of the classroom

The creative use of art materials provides a worthwhile way for children to express their impressions of the world surrounding them. It is not "busy-work." It is a vital form of communication and one of the most desirable forms of independent activity. The introductions to the various art media can be made at various times of the year to the whole class. From the time of introduction, supplies and equipment should be easily accessible so that each child can experiment and create with whatever medium he chooses.

Most teachers keep the bulk of their art supplies in one central location and from there disperse them as needed to previously-prepared easels, tables, or desks. This supply depot should bulge with a bountiful supply of papers--all sizes, shapes, textures, and colors, stored in an orderly fashion. From bulk quantities of paint, chalk, and crayons, the teacher can keep individual containers well filled (egg cartons for chalk, small jars for paint, decorated cans for crayons). An overflowing carton of scrap materials provides the children with "things" with which they can design collage creations. A variety of paint brushes, finger paint, right- and left-handed scissors, paste, glue, clay, sawdust, wire, string, rope -- you name it: if each has its special place, children will learn to select, use, and care for the materials of their choice.

We hardly need mention that the teacher who has not gathered supplies for "mop-ups" is unprepared for individualized art. Numerous trash receptacles, absorbent cloths and sponges, soap, scouring powder, a broom and a dust pan are as necessary as the art materials themselves.

Keeping tight control of supplies, cautioning children against "wasting" supplies, and allowing the use of supplies only when the teacher is in charge of the situation, are sure ways to snap the creative lifeline between the child and an aesthetic appreciation of his existence.

The Science Center - the "searching mind" of the classroom

In the manipulation of materials to discover knowledge that is new to him, the child is using all of his creative powers. The teacher's role at such a time is chiefly that of an observer. As the child experiments, explores, discovers, invents, solves problems, he is expanding his universe in ways that are real and meaningful for him.

The scientific knowledge that the child seeks and gains for himself during an independent activity period should in no way be construed as a substitute for the science curriculum. The child may or may not choose an activity which relates to a current science unit. Whatever his decision, the learnings he derives are supplemental. They are widening the horizons of his world and leading to understandings which will increase his ability to communicate.

No attempt has been made to list science supplies and equipment as such a list would barely scratch the surface of what is available. Good professional texts have literally hundreds of suggestions for inexpensive materials for experimentation. Acquire a goodly supply.

The hungry roots of a "searching mind" need the constant nourishment of first-hand observation in order to grow and ultimately ripen into a harvest of knowledge.

Play-acting Center - the "other world" in the classroom

An area should be set aside so that a child has opportunities to be someone else for a time. The play center allows him to exchange his position in society from that of a small boy to the imposing status of a milkman, doctor, bus driver, or father. The earnestness the child displays at such times is a sincere reflection of his interest in the world around him. He observes people at work and at play, and his desire to step into their shoes is his way of striving for a more complete understanding of his relationships with them.

Making simple costumes and props adds to the fun and the "realness" of play situations. A little girl might want to construct a paper flower garden, decorate an Easter hat, or paint the ingredients for a special family dinner. Boys can make moustaches, police badges, astronaut's helmets, or the front cab of a tractor-trailer.

The object is to allow children opportunities to come out of their shells and give full rein to their imaginations.

Later in the year, when reading has become a part of their lives, they will want to role-play book characters with whom they identify. Think of how such experiences can add to the richness of their reading!

The child who steps willingly into "other worlds" cannot fail on his return to bring back feelings of empathy, appreciation, and understanding to the problems of his own world.

Game and Toy Center - a facilitator in the classroom

Games and toys which stimulate thinking should be placed in an area where a child or a small group of children can play during an independent activity period.

The market is literally flooded with suggested play materials. Professional magazines and texts also offer a wealth of ideas for inexpensive devices which can be made by the teacher himself. Many of these have little to do with the business of learning. The teacher needs to be highly selective as he chooses those most suitable for the interests and intellectual abilities of his children.

The inclusion of the following materials would seem to give an added dimension to the learning enviornment: mathematical manipulative devices to help a child discover and formulate mathematical concepts; jig-saw puzzles to increase visual perception and discrimination; blocks--and they come in an infinite variety of shapes and sizes--to encourage a child to duplicate, on a small scale, larger life experiences; reading games to strengthen mechanical and comprehension skills; checkers, dominoes, and other like games, to require him to think and to provide him with opportunities to learn better ways of dealing with his peers.

The possibilities for creativity and ingenuity as the child plays are limitless; and since these are the intellectual qualities we are striving to develop, thought-provoking games and creative toys should take their rightful place as an integral part of every classroom.

The Hobby Center - a "growing edge" in the classroom

While this type of center may be more suitable to older children, it deserves some mention here. There may be a few primary children who have already started a collection or who are beginning to develop an interest in constructing models, or -- but it's impossible to make an adequate list of things children become enthusiastic about.

It's a mistake to believe that the classroom has more important things to attend to than these individual interests of children. Encourage them to bring their hobbies to school, to work on them during independent work periods, and to share their enjoyment of them with their classmates.

The child who is pursuing a hobby is displaying to the teacher the very "growing edge" of his expanding personality. You may never know how your attitude toward a hobby has affected the adult life of a child.

One fourth grade boy spent every free moment during the school year building and drawing intricate ship models. He became a recognized authority and was asked to speak and display his models and drawings at other schools. Today, as a grown man, that boy is considered one of the top ship designers in the industry.

The little guy with his hip pocket bulging with football cards may become a sports announcer, or a manufacturer of athletic equipment, or a father who finds time to coach a Boys' Club team.

The little girl who delights in sewing dresses for her doll may become a home arts teacher, or a fashion designer, or a skillful homemaker who has the best dressed children in the neighborhood.

You just never know————

Language Development in the Content Fields

The language arts are so thoroughly intertwined with the daily activities of all individuals that they may be defined as the skills of living together. Or, to be more specific, the language arts are the skills one develops for the purpose of receiving and expressing ideas.

A rich supply of words which have precise meanings, the use and understanding of clear-cut phrases and sentences, an abundance of ideas, and the ability to use those ideas to clarify and extend meanings are basic to both oral and written communication.

In the classroom, the communication of ideas is nurtured by the learnings gleaned from the subject matter fields. As the concepts, meanings, and vocabulary of each field are developed, the child grows in his ability to interpret, assimilate, and make creative use of ideas unique to each area.

The language arts, then, can no longer be considered a separate segment of the school curriculum. Language development is impeded when a child is required to learn and practice skills in artificially contrived situations for which he can see no purpose. Isolated skills must in some way be integrated into functional situations.

Growth in thinking, listening, speaking, and composing* flourish when a child is purposefully using them in pursuit of subject matter understandings. Language learning takes place when a child identifies and works on a needed communication skill in order to reach a goal he has set for himself. In the classroom, these goals are usually established by a child's interest in the content of a field.

At the teacher makes instructional plans with and for her pupils, she should use the following questions to evaluate the appropriateness of each group activity.

- Is this activity open-ended -- so as to meet the needs and abilities of each child?
- Is this activity thought-provoking -- so as to strengthen the interrelationships between oral and written reception and expression?
- Is this activity dovetailed -- so as to integrate identified language needs with desired content learnings?

The following list of suggestions has been gathered from teachers who have endeavored to keep the above questions in mind. The suggestions have purposely been stated in general terms so that the reader may interpret a given activity in as many ways as is possible in order to meet the wide range of abilities and interests within his own classroom.

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*The term composing is meant to encompass both oral and written literary expression.

They have been categorized arbitrarily. The interrelationships among the four areas of communication permit many activities suggested for one area to be adapted and made suitable for other areas.

The reader is encouraged, therefore, to accept, adapt, or reject a given activity as each is critically examined in the light of what he knows about each child in his class and what he wants to help him learn.

SOCIAL STUDIES: a time to deepen understandings of man's past and present relationships to his environment and to develop the attitudes and values consistent with the democratic way of life

Unit Activities

Specific concept: In a democracy, each individual has certain privileges and responsibilities*

Specific content: What are the rights of the members of a group?

What are the responsibilities of the members of a group?

Listening activities:

- Completing the ending of a story by putting one's self in the place of a key character ("The Grasshopper and the Ant," "The Little Red Hen")
- Practicing the courtesies of good listening while participating in group discussions
- Listening attentively in order to make a class chart which lists school personnel and their special responsibilities

Speaking activities:

- Planning a mural showing children assuming classroom responsibilities
- Exploring the relationship between an individual's rights and his responsibilities
- Dramatizing classroom responsibilities by the use of puppets
- Extending oral invitations to school personnel

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*Scope and Sequence with Illustrative Units, "Finding Patterns in Our School Environment". p.6, Social Studies, Grade K-6, Montgomery County Public Schools Bulletin 175-1, 1964.

Reading activities:

- Matching captions on cards with those on the mural
- Choosing statements from a group of statements that defines a personal understanding of the term "rights of individuals"
- Choosing magazine illustrations showing people enjoying privileges or assuming responsibilities

Composing activities:

- Composing captions for the mural
- Composing a story using "magic words," e.g., please, thank you
- Composing thank-you letters to school personnel
- Composing sentences to accompany pictures drawn to illustrate what the child identifies as his most important responsibility to his classmates

SCIENCE: a time to inquire, observe, investigate, and experiment in order to develop desirable attitudes toward independent research and deepen understandings of physical phenomena

Unit Activities

Specific context: Sound is a form of energy resulting from vibration.*

Specific content: Musical instruments produce sound when solids or columns of air are caused to vibrate.

Sound travels through gases, solids, and liquids.

Sound travels in all directions from the source.

Listening activities:

- Distinguishing instruments by their sounds
- Determining that sound travels from a given source to all parts of the room
- Experimenting to discover that sound travels through liquids, solids, gases
- Listening in order to identify what the purpose is for viewing a filmstrip on sound

Speaking activities:

- Developing an understanding of the terms solids, liquid, gases by actively participating in group discussions
- Developing an understanding of words needed to participate in the thinking or inquiry process, *e.g.*, I wonder whether..., Could it be..., If ... then, because ... then, either ... this or that
- Experimenting and explaining in one's own terms the differences in the sounds of musical instruments
- Experimenting in small groups with a variety of materials and discussing observations in order to form generalizations

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*Science, Supplementary Guide, Elementary Grades, p. 4, Montgomery County Public School Bulletin 166, 1962.

- Participating in a class discussion following the viewing of a filmstrip
- Planning and making classroom instruments
- Planning a program for parents

Reading activities:

- Skimming material in several sources to locate information
- Categorizing musical instruments as to type, e.g., string, percussion, brass, woodwinds
- Participating in a planned program of reading pictures, charts, explanations, or creative stories

Composing activities:

- Labeling science equipment
- Making notes from reading selections
- Recording observations of experiments
- Making charts to categorize known substances as solids, liquids, or gases
- Developing a list of words that describe sounds
- Creating and illustrating stories in which a musical instrument acts like "someone I know"
- Writing letters of invitation to parents
- Recording plans for making classroom instruments

MATHEMATICS: a time to acquire an understanding of the basic mathematic structure, its language and principles, and appreciate its contribution to our cultural heritage

Unit Activities

Specific concept: To develop an understanding that mathematical relationships in a problem situation may be determined in a variety of ways.*

Specific skills and abilities: To understand the language of the problem*

To demonstrate the problem situation by using concrete objects*

To analyze a problem by means of a drawing or a diagram*

Listening activities:

- Listening to problem situations and making diagrams to illustrate them
- Listening to problem situations and using concrete objects to demonstrate them
- Writing number sentences from oral statements

Speaking activities:

- Describing the number story told by a series of objects placed on the flannel board
- Clarifying mathematical meanings in small group discussions
- Interpreting orally two related pictures which present a problem situation

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*Elementary Mathematics Course of Study, Montgomery County Public Schools Bulletin 186, 1966, p. 55.

Reading activities:

- Associating mathematical symbols with equivalent English word forms and understanding the concepts to which these words refer
- Selecting pertinent information in order to solve a problem situation

Composing activities:

- Recording answers to problem situations in picture form, number sentences, or in English sentences
- Restating number sentences as English sentences

LITERATURE: a time to become aware of the beauty of language and to develop greater insight into human experience

Unit Activities

Purpose: To help the children in the class who are always misplacing their belongings to identify with Herman the Loser by Russell Hoban,* who was a "loser" before he was a "finder"

To help children who do not misplace their belongings see that they can help "losers" become "finders" through sympathy, tolerance, and understanding

Listening activities:

- Enjoying the story (first reading)
- Identifying words that help make mental images or that have a pleasing sound (rereading)
- Identifying repetitious terms which add to the enjoyment of the story (rereading)

Speaking activities:

- Discussing meanings of unfamiliar terms that will be heard in the story
- Discussing the actions of the characters and identifying the reasons why Herman finally decided he was more of a finder than a loser
- Telling the story using a flannel board
- Choosing the funniest parts of the story and explaining what made them funny

Reading activities:

- Sorting previously identified words from the story into categories suggested by the teacher or determined by individual or group analysis

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*An Illustrative Unit for Grade I, Literature Program K-12, Part I, Montgomery County Public Schools Bulletin 185, 1965, p. I-1.

- Arranging sentences describing action of the story in sequential order
- Making a picture to illustrate a word or a sentence from the story
- Reading original descriptions of story characters so that classmates can identify them

Composing activities:

- Writing a "Who Am I?" description (appearance and/or behavior) of a character in the story
- Writing an anecdote from personal experience describing a time when something was lost

ART: a time to express ideas and emotions through the use of varied art media and to build an appreciation for the elements of art which contribute to man's aesthetic environment

Unit Activities

Specific concept: Colors and color words can influence our ideas and feelings

Specific purposes:

- To take care of and use art supplies properly
- To associate color and music by analyzing emotional responses
- To establish a sense of individuality by analyzing personal preferences
- To understand and use color words as a form of literary expression

Listening activities:

- Following instructions concerning the proper care and handling of art equipment
- Choosing a color to convey the mood of a musical selection
- Analyzing poems which use color as a theme

Speaking activities:

- Discussing the various colors of story illustrations and how they aid in conveying the mood of a story
- Discussing the use of color words to convey an idea or a feeling, *e.g.*, *blue* mood, in the *pink*

Reading activities:

- Analyzing different illustrations for the same story; deciding which one helps to better the appreciation and understanding of the story
- Arranging pupil-made story illustrations on a bulletin board in proper sequence

Composing activities:

- Listing words that a color calls to mind, e.g., red--fire engine, hot, fast, angry
- Using color words as the theme of an original poem

MUSIC: a time to enjoy and recognize the expressive qualities of music and to become aware of its importance in the life of man

Unit Activities

Specific concept: To develop an understanding of how voices or musical instruments can be used singly or together to elicit feelings from each listener

Specific purposes: To develop an understanding and an appreciation for American work and play-party songs

To distinguish simple melodies in orchestral arrangements of folk tunes

Listening activities:

- Enjoying the story the words of a song tell
- Listening critically to their own singing in order to identify factors which will improve the interpretation of a song
- Clapping hands, stamping feet, snapping fingers, slapping thighs, to fit the rhythm of a song
- Deciding what instruments are featured in various parts of a recorded selection
- Identifying how many times a melody is repeated

Speaking activities:

- Building understandings of unfamiliar words used in the lyrics of a song
- Interpreting poetic forms of expression
- Explaining what elements of a musical selection caused specific feelings

Reading activities:

- Browsing through music books to select new songs

- Matching pictures of musical instruments with cards bearing their names (assuming that the "sound" science unit is being explored during the same time of the school year)

Composing activities:

- Writing original titles for musical selections
- Making up new words to a familiar melody
- Making up additional stanzas for favorite songs
- Composing the words and music of a song

PHYSICAL EDUCATION: a time to enjoy and develop rhythmic and athletic skills to their fullest capabilities and establish worthy habits of social behavior

Unit Activity

Specific activity: Pass Ball Relay

Specific objectives: To follow directions, wait in line, and take turns

To develop skills in throwing and catching a ball*

Listening activities:

- Asking and answering questions related to the procedure of the new game
- Demonstrating a new game to classmates
- Discriminating difference between similiar games

Speaking activities:

- Helping to organize a small group to play the game without teacher guidance
- Evaluating the physical education period

Reading activities:

- Interpreting a diagram of the new game
- Sorting teacher-prepared sentences into relevant and irrelevant piles, e.g., throw the ball as slowly as you can, throw the ball as quickly as you can; throw the ball with one hand, throw the ball with both hands, etc.

Composing activities:

- Listing skills to be practiced for the game

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*Physical Education Program, K-6, Montgomery County Public Schools Bulletin 196, 1966, p. 45.

- Comparing two similiar types of games, and giving a written explanation of why one is preferred - or why one is not as preferable as the other - or why they are both equally enjoyable

- Keeping a categorized record of class physical education activities

HEALTH AND SAFETY EDUCATION: a time to develop appropriate knowledge and attitudes which will establish life-long desirable physical and mental health habits and to recognize personal responsibility for the safety of one's self and others

Unit Activities

Specific concept: To develop an understanding of the importance of following teacher directions during emergency drills*

Specific content: What are the standard procedures to follow during emergency drills?

What procedures are to be followed if an individual is not in his classroom when there is an emergency drill?

What responsibilities must each individual assume during an emergency drill?

Listening activities:

- Remembering and following directions during practice drills
- Asking questions in order to find out what to do in unusual situations for which the teacher has not given directions

Speaking activities:

- Dramatizing emergency situations
- Discussing "The Boy Who Called Wolf" and its relation to present day false alarms
- Identifying new learnings acquired by visiting a fire station

Reading activities:

Collecting newspaper and magazine pictures of emergency vehicles

Learning to understand and use the work "exit"

Reading "Smokey the Bear" materials (pictures, charts, comic books)

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*Safety K-6, Montgomery County Public Schools Bulletin 187, 1965, p. 13.

Composing activities:

- Making a drawing of the school building and marking all exits
- Drawing and making captions for a collection of pictures showing what rules to follow during an emergency drill
- Restating in one's own words the importance of following directions during an emergency drill

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"The Independent Work Period." pp. 87-107.
"Flow Chart - Classroom Management." pp. 7-10.
"The Individual Conference." pp. 49-54.
"Some Pointers on Asking Questions." pp. 134-135.
"List of Suggested Questions." pp. 156-158.
"The Useability of the Running Log." p. 453.
"Teaching Connections Between Sights and Sounds of Letters." pp. 280-281.
"Phonics and Phonetics." pp. 269-270.
"Comprehensive Outlines of Skills or Components of the Reading Process." pp. 376-377.
"The Fallacy of Sequential Skills." p. 379.
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